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MACLEAN'S

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JUNE
29th

BARACK OBAMA **WHY HE'S BAD FOR CANADA**

**His ambitions
could cripple
our economy P.20**

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ETHICS
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ANALYTICS



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Politics



I love this country! Obama told us in February. But that was then.

Obama reconsidered

Besides Obama's presidential victory was an exciting moment for Canadians as well as Americans; we too thrived in the prospect of new era in American politics. Half a year on, that excitement is waning off. As Maclean's Washington correspondent Laura Clark Savage explains in our cover story ("Why Barack Obama is far from 'Conservative,'" pg. 26), the recent evidence from White House appears contrary to our best interests. Should we be changing our minds on Obama?

The decentralized nature of American politics means Obama can't be blamed for everything the U.S. government does. Just like less responsibility for bad decisions and mistakes sign fewer powers of persuasion. How he uses those powers (or doesn't) is significant. Take trade policy.

Obama campaign pledged as a protectionist and promised to reverse NAFTA. Since his election, he has vacillated somewhat, and, to his credit, removed "Buy American" provisions from Federal programs funded by his massive stimulus bill. Still he has also stood aside as various state and local stimulus provisions have shut out Canadian bidders and insisted the free trade with this in turn has given rise to an expensive "Buy Canadian" movement that has been. Canadian federal and provincial politicians have put considerable effort into trying to stop the protectionist trade winds. Obama has done nothing.

IN APRIL, Maclean's pulled back the curtain on Men Like Us, Canada's longest-running ragaboot column. For 25 years, Vincent Scalfari has endorsed himself to Working gents with earthy, practical advice to gruff and often unusual problems. Now he has a much bigger audience. Within weeks of our profile, Scalfari bagged a new job at the blossoming Fox News, picked up an agent and speaking engagements. He's still looking, but he's right, however.

OBAMA
Barack Obama's
first 100 days
in office, from
January 20 to
February 2009

OBAMA'S
OBAMA'S**OBAMA'S**
OBAMA'SBY JEFFREY
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BLOGS



ANDREW PGITTER

Honestly, I don't know what to say about Stephen Harper's statement that "the effects of the recession are beginning to ease." I

24% Agree completely
12% Agree
23% Disagree
41% Disagree completely



SCOTT FESCHUK

Pencilling it away off the presser, I tried as hell and I'm not going to take it any longer or stay silent any longer. It's time to stand up to the conservative wing of popular media, political reality and the legislative timetable that still remembers me as hell? macleans.ca/stephar

WEB POLL RESULTS

To what extent do you agree with Stephen Harper's statement that "the effects of the recession are beginning to ease?"

Things have gotten better for me, but I don't think it's true for everyone. It might be true for some sectors, but not the rest. Not feeling it yet.
I don't agree at all: things are as bad as they've ever been.

THIS WEEK'S POLL: macleans.ca/stephar

VIDEO PODCAST

Coyne
Vs.
Wells

Watch columnists Paul Wells and Coyne vs. Coyne as they debate the future of the Conservative government. A new video podcast airs every Wednesday morning at 8 a.m. macleans.ca/morningnews

OPENING

Craig Kielburger reviews the latest book from his co-founder, Kailash Satyarthi, and discusses the author's new book tour. macleans.ca/kiel

WEEKEND

Carrie Lihouke reviews the new book from her co-founder, Kailash Satyarthi, and discusses the author's new book tour. macleans.ca/kiel



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'Teenagers binge drink because they see countless examples of it from so-called adults'

BAILOUT BONKERS

ANDREW COYNE pens a different spin on the auto bailout ("We'll pay for this bailout for years," Opinions, June 25), but what is a tax payer to do? We've heard in terms as one federal and provincial leaders spared our money trying to save the already dead North American auto companies. One of them should have been allowed to go under! It would have given the others a chance to shape up and compete without raising the country into debt ground. Isn't that what should happen in a market-driven economy? Now all the capitalists have become socialists. They will take our money, and our children and grand children will pay for it!

Leanne Taylor, Guelph, Ont.

IT'S ABSOLUTELY infuriating to see poverty rates bingeing out compared to General Motors. As an interior I very not understand the complete web of consequences this may bring, but I know perfectly well that the money could be used more efficiently to do other things. It's unbelievable that thousands of low skill jobs are abolished when thousands of foreign doctors and engineers are along away for 19.95 an hour. Raising the rates is so depressing, no wonder name of my poem is *do it yourself*.

Emily Zink, Toronto

ADDING UP AUTO COSTS

PLEASE STOP perpetuating the myth about auto worker wages. The \$10 per hour wage that Mark Stoyle cites ("Slayor's health care's not a bust," Steps, June 15) is a made-up statistic by an otherwise conservative group opposed to the bailout. To get that number they combined salary, benefits, pension plan, vacation and raises ("nothing growing," they then claimed) that number by auto workers, and came up with \$70 per hour. The true hourly wage of the United Auto Workers' auto workers is almost the same as the non-American manufacturers, UAW

under the car, consume alcohol in mass, or that older people won't crash the party. There is a whole body of law out there pertaining to "social hostibility," perfunctory dealing with loans of funds to drinking parents. One could think that responsible parents would reduce that by arguing each parties they are not only putting their guests in mass but are putting their financial security at risk as well. After a devastating spate of drunk-related deaths in 2008, in the 80s and 90s started to put a right and realized there was a role and ushered to the forefront under-age drinking party. Parents should wake up and smell the roses!

David Perry, Toronto, B.C.



"GM Hopes there is a political party who will say "no more"'

is paying for more retired people and their benefits because has been employing people for almost a hundred years. The average starting wage for an auto-worker is \$15 and it takes 20 years to reach the top tier of 21st Century car to former GM CEO Rick Wagoner, who received that 4 million last year in salary and bonuses. Union employee wages account for approximately seven percent of the total cost of building a vehicle. How does the figure cause the company to go bankrupt? Canadians pay more taxes on a vehicle purchase than what the company pays employees to build the car.

Marc Cheneau, Oshawa, Ont.

TEACHING TEMPERANCE

AS THE ORGANIZER of the "Dry Grid," concept or Pedition, B.C., I am dismayed at the trend to return to teenage drinking parties hosted by parents ("Should you let your kids drink at home?" House, June 8). Parents evidently think that they are doing something responsible, but this creates a little sense of safety; no parent can know that an auto accident will leave early, have a handful set of keys

under the car, consume alcohol in mass, or that older people won't crash the party. There is a whole body of law out there pertaining to "social hostibility," perfunctory dealing with loans of funds to drinking parents. One could think that responsible parents would reduce that by arguing each parties they are not only putting their guests in mass but are putting their financial security at risk as well. After a devastating spate of drunk-related deaths in 2008, in the 80s and 90s started to put a right and realized there was a role and ushered to the forefront under-age drinking party. Parents should wake up and smell the roses!

David Perry, Toronto, B.C.

INSTEAD of focusing on youthfull foolishness, how about putting the onus on the adults and the alcohol selling culture they model to young people? Teen binge drink because they see countless examples from so-called adults. I am glad to see that some parents are attempting to introduce responsible drinking to their teens, but a better message to young people is to tell them that in a few years, they can probably save enough to buy a car or a down payment on a house with the money they would otherwise spend on partying.

William Gregg, Guelph, Ont., B.C.

ALBERTAN AGENDAS

IT'S NOT FEAR OF HOMOEROTIC that makes bigoted, and ignorant homophobes so reviled when they say, in reference to Alberta's Bill 44 ("We're just trying to create a living field, where the rights of all are protected" and no one is allowed to co-opt the agenda) ("The new head of the class?" Education, June 15). It is the religious right in this province who has re-pudged the agenda. While Bill 44 intends to finally enshrine the full human rights of gays and lesbians, it also allows parents to remove their children from public classrooms when sexual orientation is being discussed. This is a thinly disguised attack on gay and lesbians. It is a violation of the doctrine of parental rights. This is spite of the fact that parents who are concerned about discussions around this topic have had their religious rights

denied in separate schools, private schools, faith-based schools (there are 75 such schools in Alberta), agnostic schools and home-schooling processes funded by the public purse. Right-Franchise liberty has done more than any other person in this position to erode gay and lesbian folks their spiritual place in the broad spectrum of human diversity. I suspect that he would argue that as an accomplished man in his career as a bishop I would have at what's actually in perpetuating injustice. Rev. Linda C. Hunter, Calgary

THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT is at it again. They are entitled to their opinions like everyone else, but to make us tolerate like Bill Cohen of United Farmland Canada did is laughable. She says that to allow families to raise their children as they see fit helps a country and

peak supply, and therefore peak supply is irrelevant. We are in the middle of a massive revolution, the likes of which the world has not seen. Now that the Internet allows for complete knowledge sharing across all manner of fields we can emerge from the crux of peak oil faster and stronger than ever thought possible. Mayayne like it also always have a reason why we can't get off our dependence for fossil fuel, but his explanation are shortsighted and outdated. With the insatiable thirst for decentralized sources of electricity created using wind, solar and other means, it is inevitable that the archaic coal-based distribution system is entering its final days. Some families will generate their own electric power. We will heat our homes without the fear of going up prices and we will drive our cars gas-free.

Rev. Wayne, Whistler

PEAK OIL

BEARD MACLEAN's for the article "Energy shocks and oil spills" (Business, June 8) Peak



"IT'S INEVITABLE THAT THE ARCHaic COAL-BASED distribution system is entering its final days"

up with apocalyptic society. It is obvious that the religious right have no interest in diversity. They disagree when the schools try to open up minds to the differences in our culture. I think it would be wonderful to teach about all major religions, but they don't want that. They want fervour and narrow intolerance. Clearly the religious right need their own schools, which they can have themselves. I, for one, am tired of their crying in their last credibility with the general public. Rev. Wells, Brooks, N.B.

QUESTIONABLE PERIOD

PAUL WILLIS provides some interesting suggestions as to how to end the potentially ridiculous spectacle known as the House of Commons question period ("Stop the nonsense," National, June 15), particularly involving some of Britain's better parliamentary practices. However, many of Willis's media friends tend to share some of the blame for our problems. The Canadian parliamentary press gallery puts the onus of an emphasis on Q&A in

and its perceived dramatic impact on our way of life is not a well-known subject. Even though the article attempts to be as balanced as possible, reading it leaves one with the feeling that everything is all right, and that once more technology is going to save us. Even your editor-in-chief, placing the word "dysfunctional" after the word "of," Cohn Campbell, hardly argues buildings, our greatest works of energy. New technology will not make any sizable dent in their energy use, unless we type users energy conserving or trapping them. The seemingly that programs have only increased our use more energy. There is no reason to stretch that has gone to change. At the end of energy will continue to rise, wouldn't it be better to start planning now?

Marie-Louise Collet, Orleans, Que.

ALL TOO OFTEN WE READ stories about economists who predict the impact of peak oil. What most of these economists fail to realize—your interview subject Jeff Rubin included—is that peak demand will come much sooner than

they do for the economy? Colin Campbell left's heart-rending wail that he can't get this year's meatballs before it becomes passé proves that the well-established consensus is that the peak is imminent. In discussing the Kindle, he shows that the content literature is far less important than the means of delivery. The media are far more important than the message. This breathless gushing has a most polarizing effect on our culture. It's like, so cutting edge. G. Alan Taylor, Ottawa

IN DISCUSSING three book judges the Kindle, Colin Campbell gets a few basic facts wrong. Not a case can occur, it's not bad; all it's "it's it." It's ineffective, just like a page of Microsoft's or any book. Also, use a non-words while reading the Kindle. The books are still available via cellular networks—usually 3G seconds or less to download, near-ebook size files. If we have Kindles in Canada as determined since by what cellular carrier would be affected. Peter Jagen,

not Amazon, or "Understanding the fundamentals of the gadget would be a helpful prerequisite for its use." Shirley Davis, *Saint-Ray, WA*

CITY SMARTS

YOUR ARTICLE ("Gangs' terrorist threat") (Special Report, June 10) seems to have con-

fused learning with spending money. According to your methodology, fee activities like attending free concerts, reading books from the library, or going for a run are worth nothing. This hardly makes it an accurate measure of lifelong learning. You look safer, neighbour-hoods, good health, and low crime rates are the learning index, but aren't the same factors linked with higher incomes? The poorer ones now likely dropped because Canadians have less disposable income to spend on cultural activities than they used to. This does not make them any dumber than they need to be, only poorer. To expect them to keep up their spending is simply ridiculous.

Sophie Lindgren, Richmond, B.C.

IN YOUR special report on Canada's contact centres, you didn't even consider discussing only the dollar amount spent on sports and recreation. This may not be an accurate representation of the actual amount of time people are engaging in sports and recreation, it merely reflects who's spending most. What about the people actively using the community tennis courts, jogging on outdoor paths, or playing hockey on a frozen lake—all free activities?

Stephanie Guyot, Victoria

HOW IRONIC that Quebec stood against the federal government in the last election over the small cuts to the arts the government was proposing, and yet Montreal and many Quebec cities issued very low tax/Montreal survey for education, culture and physical activity. Congratulations to Calgary, the tax now



MANY PEOPLE forget the human rights abuses in China*

From the "West (in the eyes of most Canadians)," for leading in all three categories. Louise Friisgaard, Abbotsford, B.C.

CHINESE TAKE OUT

THANK YOU, Montreal, for consistently opposing the quasi fascist regime of China and surrounding people of the 20th anniversary of Tiananmen Square ("It didn't happen," *World*, June 15). Far too many people see only economic growth while forgetting the gross human rights abuses perpetrated by the government of China. Maybe our Prime Minister will regain some backbone and cancel his planned trip.

Howard Palauka, Toronto

TAX APPRECIATION DAY

NEIL VELDHUIS of the Fraser Institute writes in his letter (*Mail Bag*, June 15) that your columnist Andrew Petter misses the point of Tax Freedom Day. Veldhuis tells us that Tax Freedom Day, by giving us a "dead line" of the price we must pay for government services, is a simple tool that allows Canadians to judge for themselves the Tax Freedom Day before the benefit received from all our gov-

ernment services. If it is the intention of the right wing at the Fraser Institute to help Canadians decide whether our indefinitely bankrupt state is worth it, then they should tell us straight out the total amount of tax imposed on the average Canadian family, but, be sure, the total amount of government services the average Canadian family uses a year, including things like law enforcement and schools, roads, parks, national defence and foreign aid, as well as all those services that governments subsidize.

Lynne Huang, Ottawa

COMIC CONTROVERSY

ONCE AGAIN, Quebec authorities prove themselves to be slower than their French counterparts. According to Daniel and M. Bula M. Bula (Interview, June 15), "Quebecers are less affected by the controversies" that surround humour, migration, humanistic values and, religious/conservative issues because, unlike the Quebec media, they can appreciate his self-prediction outside hyperbole as "a process of assimilation... based on provocation." There is no sense in meadow and only research that self-existing cultures, but, apparently, disconcerts his conservative efforts to promote social harmony and universal understanding. Whether more performers worthy of film audiences? *Ques devons indeed!*

Mark S. Roth, Whistler

THE CONTROVERSY surrounding Davidson are indicative. Comedians regularly joke that at anyone and anything, in part of the trade. He is only guilty of targeting Quebec, one of the most powerful lobsters in the world, and targeting its power, prime political purpose. He is denounced only because many of the things he says resonate, the creation in Davidson's own words, it is comparable to

apartheid, and Zionism is a political movement that must be resisted.

Zachary Knowles, Peterborough, Ont.

WHAT AILS US

REBVO TO Scott Steer for his column "Business is our birthright, people" (Freight, June 15). I couldn't agree more. "We need to stand up and sing making ourselves heard." Big Pharma makes billions of dollars each year as more and more diseases seem to emerge. This practice of disease-emerging needs to stop. With diseases such as Alzheimer's, one really begs the question what came first, the pill or the disease?

Arifely Khosroshenas, Thornhill, Ont.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Cirque du Soleil has publicly conveyed its "shock and profound disappointment" that such a respected and well-established magazine would make use of the cover page of its June 15, 2009, issue to promote a book (Jan Halperin's *Gay LeMieux: The Fabulous Story of the Creator of Cirque du Soleil*) through a non-retroactive photo montage and a vulgar title giving a false, vulgar and defamatory image of the company.

Mark S. Roth does not agree with that characterization—the cover image was in fact available on the Cirque's own website—and we recognize that the Cirque is a great Canadian creative institution. We are publishing first of its work. Halperin's book is an unauthorized biography of Gay LeMieux. The excerpts of the book that were published in the magazine refer to past events and do not necessarily reflect upon the Cirque du Soleil itself as an ongoing business enterprise or on its current employees.

We welcome readers to submit letters to either letters@westcan.ca or MacLean's, 11th floor, One Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1P3. Please supply your name, address and daytime telephone number. Letters should be less than two words, and may be edited for space, style and clarity.

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A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF MOAMMAR GADHAFI

The Libyan leader visited Italy and went to Villa Pamphili, a large public garden in Rome, where he pitched the tent he stays in while staying there. On Friday, he failed to show for a meeting with deputies on the Italian parliament. Later, to avoid a diplomatic row, he met in his tent with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who explained that Gadhafi is "a bit unique." That evening, he addressed more than 700 journalists and businesspeople, claiming to be a defender of women's rights.

Good news

Bench strength

An B.C. judge got it right this week when he rejected a motion to water down the findings of a seven-month inquiry into the death of Polish immigrant Robert Dziekonski. Lawyers representing the four RCMP members who tortured the man at the Vancouver airport had argued the inquiry had no jurisdiction to rule on the conduct of the police, whose deputy head, Thomas Beaudreault, would've been caught had he sought to find the torturing was unapologetic and that the Mounties misled the inquiry. In another victory for common sense, the Supreme Court of Canada restored the sentence of Kelly Ellard in the murder 12 years ago of teenager Jason Vick. Ellard has had two trials; one hung jury, and two guilty-verdicts overturned on appeal. A fourth trial would have been a logistical challenge, and a nightmare for the Vick family.

Comeback kids

After they lost the first two games of the Stanley Cup final, few thought the Pittsburgh Penguins had chance against the Detroit Red Wings. When they came back and forced a game seven in Joe Louis Arena, when the Red Wings nearly lost, the odds were still against them. Yet the Penguins pulled off, making Sidney Crosby, at 21, the youngest captain to lift the Cup. It was a thrill ride to the season, and about eight million Americans watched the final game—the big audiences since the 1971 final between Montreal and Chicago. Thanks to the Pens and its young star, hockey's future is bright.

Moving forward

An outreach program by the University of Victoria has attracted more than 600 First

Nation students, up from just 30 a decade ago. Their graduation rate at a nearby university was held June 15. National Reconciliation Day. The day marks the first anniversary of the federal government's apology for the abuses suffered at residential schools. And finally last week, the government removed three new members of the much-dated commission aiming to give school survivors a chance to request their experiences and draft a commemorative plan. Turn

FACE OF THE WEEK



SIDNEY CROSBY after the Pittsburgh Stanley Cup win; it seems he's getting the trophy after like, um, isn't bad luck after all

ing education into a positive experience, as UVic has, is an unusual step.

Rat Island, pop. 0

It took 129 years, and a week of dredging, to banish the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to end the plague of rats on Alaska's Rat Island. Norwegian sealers caught the arctic island in 1980 from the wreckage of a stranded Japanese ship. The rats had wiped out the island's bird population—but just days after the last rat's demise, the birds are returning. Now all the island needs is a new name.

Bad news

Spare us the squibs

Federal politicians squandered yet another week last Thursday when they conveniently disguised their effective leadership. First, Michael Ignatieff threatened to bring down the government unless Prime Minister Stephen Harper agreed to provide details on further EI reforms. The PM responded with equal (and equally empty) bluster, easily refusing to extend the EI scheme. What did this latest round of open parliamentary face-off yield? Nothing

but an effective system the public can scarcely afford to replace. Violence spread throughout the country—particularly in rural areas—plucking the less and injured from R.C.M.P. backcountry, while local societies pay their members. If liability laws drive them out of business, drivers who wander into trouble or who face may find themselves with no rescuers at all.

Failing grades

It was a bad week for education. A country-wide survey by the Dominion Institute of Canada gave B.C., Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories a D+ for failing to teach students about the country's past. Meanwhile, an independent committee of New Brunswicks recommended more standardized tests in French schools after finding that French students perform worse academically than those at English schools. Free jazz is quick to talk up Canada's well-educated, bilingual workforce when trying to lure investment. They should invest a little to keep it that way.

Groonds for refusal

A lone Scot is trying to take Tim Horner, the province's human rights commission for not letting her drive his mobility scooter up to the drive-through of a local franchise. Tim Horner, which bans scooters at drive-throughs for safety reasons, should find a way to get this one in coffee—that's just basic customer service. Still, an assessment of how skewed the human rights industry has become that someone would think driving through double doors is a human right and, worse, that the state must be enlisted to see we get one in the manner he chooses. ■

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PROTESTING: the British National Party, the fringe-right's gone. In the European Parliament have been greatly exaggerated, says Mark

The feeble 'march' of Euro-fascism



PAUL WELLS
Boo! Did I scare you? Good! We like scaring you here at *Mashable*. That's why we like these rip-roaring cover stories: we hope that you'll pack up and read the rather unflattering one. That's what we did last week with our cover of *grossly thuggish* warlords under the river-line THE RETURN OF FASCISM.

The river pointed to a colour by our Mark Steyn and Mark's column—well, that's better since... Here's why:

The European Parliament's Margaret Beckett, after the centre-right and the socialists, in the "non-inert," Mark notes. Their member has implied to "just under a hundred" thanks, he claims, to the European election of June 4-7. These two merit "ridiculous" (bendy-word) sentence of the "two flanks," one from the Slovak National Party, two from the British National Party, two from the Austria Freedom Party, and so on. "Many of them, oddly, add to the political centre," Mark writes, "because they believe in 'soft' euros."

A hundred broad-euro deputies with shoulders? Goodness. Fortunately it's balanced. There are indeed 93 non-inert. But that, for the most part, because of the election. Large? The 72 members of Identity, Democracy and Sovereignty coalition fall apart in 2009.

Fewer inerts means more non-inert.

How many of the 93 are friend of sweater? Mark's measured his statistics by way of 756 in the European Parliament. Let me tell you about the rest:

One, like Mebane, is the leader of France's Alliance des Drapeau-Net. It's a mostly conservative front from Britain. One, Joe Higgins, leads Ireland's Socialist Party. One is from Sweden's Pirate Party, which supports free internet. She's sharing. One of the British MEPs is an Ulster Unionist. Another is a Democratic Unionist, which is kind of the same. One, Derek Trussell, is the heart of Britain's version of *Are We There Yet?* That's a *sixty Grouper*: those are Americans who campaign against organic organic obesity. One is a member of Spain's Popular Party, and Democracy party, which opposes that country's regional secession and would have won if it were Spanish.

Then while it's far to match Mark's figures against my handwavy numbers one by one, that ignites the pantyhysteria of the majority of the non-inert. Most come from the heart of the European nationalists. Nine are members of the Czech Republic's governing Civic Democratic party. Twenty-one others belong to Italy's centre-left Democratic Party. And 25 are members of David Cameron's UK Conservatives.

These aren't fascists.

Neither, in fact, are all of the 19 that Mark lists. Two belong to Latvia's Civic Union party. Its leader is Sandis Kalsans. She was born in a Soviet labour camp in Siberia. A leading figure in the Latvian independence movement, she was her country's ambassador to France. Then its foreign minister. She was a European communist for agitators. This campaign's readership is larger than the population of Latvia, and I wish Mark hadn't used our pages to employ she is a fascist.

I suspect 67 more inertists who can't be any stretch of the imagination be called fascists. The rest, when I can't check for, amount to 3.5 per cent of the European Parliament's members. Mark says the EU is "filled by ultra-extreme-right xenophobes." A passenger signs the glass is at least 36.5 per cent empty. An optimist says it's full.

Surely some fence is too many. But fences can't be "back" if it never went away. Spain says the U.K. "caused a dark Rubicon" by electing two British National Party members. Must be the name Rubicon it crossed in 46, when Conservative Peter Griffiths was in fonthole as the slogan, "If you want a bigger fire next year, vote Labour." In 2003 Mark wrote a column about Australia's extreme right winning 39 per cent of the vote. That's your 16 per cent. It hasn't the trend line I'll take it.

But I have to ask: Since Mark is using Kalsans and Cesarzon and dozens of others to pad his brevity tally, perhaps he could define fascism in the modern European context. And tell us what he dislikes about it, if anything.

Take because he says these groups are "cul-

turally prosocialistic in a way the polytechnic left most certainly isn't." Whatever a polytechnic left is, Mark is clearly no fan. In an apparently reference to newspaper columnists, he complains that "a few of us [are] shouting 'laaaaa' at every interview to the media parties." Which ones? Is there a single editor today for a large Canadian newspaper who shrieks about "russia" as frequently as Mark Steyn shrieks about Latvia?

Mark blames the left's hyperconservatism for driving "more and more of the European vote" to "fringe parties." As examples he names Dutch documentary Govt. Wilden and the UK Independence Party. Yet he sees "nothing" to connect LIED to the fringe "other than the blinding of the politico-media class." And he has written about Wilden many times, always approvingly. Likewise, he both worry about Muslims. In his file, Reiss, Wilden displays a bar graph that shows 4.1 million "Muslims" in the UK. The number comes from the Central Institute Islamic Archive in Soest, Germany, which notes that only 14 million of those Muslims are in the European Union. Another 21 million are in Russia and 3.9 million in Turkey. When asked whether he wants Turkey in the EU, Wilden said, "No. Not as it is, not as it is in a million years." Yet he's eager to put Turkey's Muslims in his bar graphs. No wonder Steyn likes him. They're both sloppy counters. ■

ON THE WEB For more Paul Wells visit his blog at www.mashable.com/wellessentials

Peak water, peak fish and the end of everything



ANDREW POTTER
What do salmon dinners, SUVs, and suburban mortgages have in common?

They all depend on cheap oil, according to the book jacket of Jeff Rubin's bizarre new book, *Why Your World is About to Get a Whole Lot Smaller*.

Rubin

is

a

former

oil

analyst

and

now

he's

an

economic

adviser.

But, surprising coming from a guy whose last job was predicting where the world economy is headed, all this talk of peak oil is old news. The peak oil movement has already moved on from its blathers with oil and—like the peasant movement of yore—split into a multitude of factions, each warning of the impending catastrophe the consequences of their form of postmodernism or another.

And so in addition to the peak oilers, we find new people arguing about peak fish—the point at which overfishing of the seas will pull from the seas (as populations decline), peak oil (as something except for energy), peak water (as impending water shortages), and peak carbon (which has apparently reached global warming). A former Cisco employee named Janice Jint has identified something called peak oiler, the point at which the ability of consumers to access crude oil runs out, with a cool title called peak dollars, the supposed limit of the government's ability to print money. And recently, in a slightly different vein, educational policy folks have warned about peak enrollment, after which university enrollment will go into terminal decline, presumably leaving the green of academic looking like an abandoned set from a new Mad Max sequel.

These arguments can be seductive. Resources, after all, are finite, and it stands to reason that at some point we'll drill all the oil and fish and the cocaine like there is hope, whether or not the peaks like that. As an economic paradigm thought regimen the fundamental economic principle of our evolution, due over the long term, increased productivity leads to ever-higher levels of prosperity, social stability, and well-being. Indeed, peakists suggest output will soon crest in my number of sectors, followed by an extended oil plateau period of decline. The assumption in historical trends in production and consumption is invariably constant along their growth path, with no hope for innovation, no leap in technological progress or improvements in institutional design.

But why should we buy that assumption? It's severely statistical to think we're not going to get massive innovation in each of those sectors. Over the past 100 years, life in the developed world got radically better by almost any conceivable measure. Life expectancy rose while infant mortality dropped; the air quality of our cities improved; food got cheaper and more nutritious; and the workplace became safer when we finally ditched there is no reason to think that sort of across-the-board progress cannot be sustained. From global warming to food production to the current economic crisis, the odds are we're going to figure things out.

Peak oil may just be a much-needed first step toward progress. As Franklin D. Roosevelt's energy secretary, Steven Chu, argued,

"**'Peakonomics'** forgets there is such a thing as innovation. The Stone Age didn't end because they reached 'peak rocks.'

Indeed.

But that's historical semantics for you. Peakists are driven not just by pessimism about the economy or the environment, but also despair of the entire modern project. Call them doomsday, dyspeptic, or neo-Malthusians, but they are at heart "dreadists." And what constitutes decline is an abiding theme for the modern world—the shallow extension, the individualism, the shallow extension and mindless consumerism. For peakists, profligacy is not a threat but a hope: once the collapse happens we'll be thrown back into a low-input high-local subsistence economy—precisely the sort of lifestyle most peakists think we should be adopting regardless.

The doomsday may be right. Thank you peak oil, our world may get a whole lot smaller, and certainly, the best-case scenario of mass local collapses that will replicate lost jobs and revolution throughout, doesn't sound so bad. But what about the prospect of more people sharing fewer resources, leading to oil strife, population explosion, even war? Even if it doesn't come to that, there is no reason to think our lives will get a whole lot better. Much about the good old days was truly awful, which is why people spent a great amount of effort trying to make things better. They failed it programs—perhaps the old-fashioned idea worth preserving. ■

ON THE WEB For more Andrew Potter visit his blog at www.macleans.ca/andrewpotter

MITCH RAPHAEL ON WHO DON NEWMAN WILL MISS AND RONA AMBROSE'S MAN-HATING DOG

SOMEBODY AT STORNOWAY IS OUT OF SORTS

Mitch Iglesias held a media garden party at Stornoway, his first since he was rung Liberal leader The Brebeuf Youth Jazz Orchestra from his Toronto office providing the music. The party was supposed to go down 6 to 8 p.m., but when it started getting chilly (noted Yvette Steeves), Zachar, invited the remaining guests into the house, where anchovies stayed churning until 10:30. Zachar's and Iglesias' frosty wife Marni was jumping all over the place. (She even jumped in Iglesias' arms when he had breakfast.) The couple had got their second cat, Eric, the day before the bushes. Marni was in a bit of a huff! Stornoway's chief, Jack Desche, calls Marni "an evil cat." Zachar served biscuits in the living room, and, despite her jumping, even Marni got a nibble.

WHO KNEW OUR SENATORS WERE THAT FIT?

Vancouver Conservative MP John Weston had several politicians, sports coaches, and Laurence Harper gather in front of the Peace Tower as part of his initiative to get MPs to exercise at least "20 minutes at 30 seconds" twice weekly in fitness sermons. The amount of time is allocated to the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games. When Conservative Senator Nancy Greene Raine told the crowd that 95 percent of senators already had some sort of fitness regime, a few gags were heard. Labour Minister René Ashba brought his dog Luna to the event. When Peter Stoffer tried to get the poohs, Ambrose warned the NDP MP that Luna barks like a gun. But Lure liked Stoffer for his sense of humor. As the group did a walking lap around the Hill, they passed AIDS activists dressed in black and white-striped dresses and white-striped shorts.



MICHAEL IGLESIAS and the Brebeuf Youth Jazz Orchestra (top left). Others shown (clockwise) Dahl, Newman, Alvaro Uribe, Roni Ambrose and Lars, Lindsay Davison, Bill Blair and a KDR protester; Steeves and Zachar with Mike Dellal; Martha Hall Findlay's campaign ribbon

ulations preventing the circumcisions of HIV transmission, saying it is the only potentially fatal procedure being touted this way. The AIDS activists were especially annoyed by NDP MP Libby Davies and Bill Blair as well as Liberal MP Hedy Fry. Before the AIDS protest had wrapped up, another group of demonstrators arrived with a flag of Stephen Harper and Colombian President Álvaro

Maduro's faces during Pierre Trudeau's first government. He was the first junior minister to have a tape recorder. "I was laughed at and ridiculed both by broadcasters and by colleagues in the print press." He has no plans to be a politician, although he notes his former fellow broadcaster Mike Duffy, who is now a senator, always had an interest in politics. Nunes Newman, "I am very happy for him that he finally got where he wanted to go." Newman hasn't voted in a federal or provincial election since 1972 because he doesn't think,

"I do vote municipally. I don't know who our mayor or councillor is. I vote for the school board and thought I have no idea who they are." When CBC got the Newsworld channel, Newman was told by his bosses not to wear his name on it. They later admitted they were wrong. "I know Newman's managing to be a big success because Brian Mulroney would phone me personally on the commercial break." With his mask wearing makeup every day? "No," says Newman. "That's been a wonderful man [Justin Trudeau] who has done my makeup since 1998. I tell him he's amazing every day."

WHAT'S MARTHA HALL FINDLAY WEARING?

Toronto Liberal MP Martha Hall Findlay was spotted wearing a seahorse ribbon she gave Foggo the government of Nunavut. Her Liberal colleague Anthony Rota, who has the far-industry promotional organization For Thermexers Association in his northern Ontario riding, says he plans to get similar ribbons for all the Liberal MPs. ■



MICHAEL IGLESIAS and the Brebeuf Youth Jazz Orchestra (top left). Others shown (clockwise) Dahl, Newman, Alvaro Uribe, Roni Ambrose and Lars, Lindsay Davison, Bill Blair and a KDR protester; Steeves and Zachar with Mike Dellal; Martha Hall Findlay's campaign ribbon

ON THE WEB: For more Ottawa activities or to contact Michael Iglesias, visit michaelsays.ca/ or michaelsays.ca/contact.html.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL IGLESIAS

RENU FRESH LENS COMFORT

DROPS

WHY BARACK OBAMA IS BAD FOR CANADA

The new President's ambitions could have a devastating effect on our economy

BY SUDHA CH. KATRINA • When Barack Obama met with Stephen Harper in Ottawa on Feb. 29, his message on the oil sands sounded like it could have been written in Calgary. He talked about the need for government investment in new technologies to curb greenhouse gas emissions, and he wanted to work together to achieve it. "I love this country and think that we could not have a better friend and ally," Obama said. "And so I'm going to do everything that I can to make sure that our relationship is strengthened."

He added: "We are very grateful for the relationship that we have with Canada, Canada being our largest energy supplier." Tom Corcoran, a former Republican congressman from Illinois and head of a Washington lobbying outfit for the oil sands, other "unconventional" fuels, remembers the day. "It was encouraging and made us feel good."

But it turns out that Obama has a fondness for making people feel good when perhaps they ought to be warning their back. "Then the mafioso begins to take root when you look at what is taking place here in Washington," says Corcoran. The reality is that Obama is leading an aggressive effort to remake America's energy policy with potentially severe consequences for the oil sands, and by extension, the Canadian economy.

PHOTO BY JEFFREY D. MILLER FOR TIME

"**'VALERIE, H.U.B. ARE AN UPHILL BATTLE,'** says an attorney for the NRDC

California's Henry Waxman, the chairman of the energy and commerce committee, have already laid pitch squarely in that camp.

Oil-sands activists push up to 85 percent more greenhouse gases than the production of conventional oil, not to mention the toll it takes on the landscape. Those concerns have caused American policy toward oil sands to undergo a complete U turn under Obama and congressional Democrats. The Bush administration saw the oil sands as a strategic national resource. George W. Bush dispatched his energy secretary to Fort McMurray, Alta., to see the operations for himself, and the 1600-energy bill even included sections to partner with Alberta to share information on developing oil from U.S. tar sands and shale. But the 1,000-plus-page climate-change bill now winding its way through Congress is full of potential uncertainty for Alberta and Canada.

The legislation, written by Waxman and Ted Markey, a Massachusetts Democrat, calls for reducing U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions by a whopping 80 percent by 2050. It also includes a cap-and-trade system and a requirement that utilities get at least 15 percent of their electricity from renewable fuels. "Alberta has an uphill battle," says Lu Baum-Brown, a senior attorney for the environmental group

National Resources Defense Council in Washington, who has been closely watching the oil sands issue. "These are large reductions. They change the way we are fueling. You can see the writing on the wall for oil sands."

Even more concerning for Canada, the bill includes provisions that would punish imports from countries whose carbon regulations are lessened by Washington's (or less stringent than those of the U.S.—making it potentially much more heavily protected) oil with implications for other sectors of the economy as well.

These measures are meant to address the potential "competitive imbalance" created for some U.S. industries by the costs of compliance with the new cap-and-trade regimen. In order to protect domestic industry and to encourage so-called "carbon leakage"—countries moving to countries with less stringent rules—the legislation calls for a tariff to be imposed on imports of manufactured products from countries whose carbon reduction regulations are deemed not to be "at least as stringent" as those of America. Canada's environmental ministers, Jeff Prentice, has denounced the measure as "green protectionism." He told *Newsweek* that he is "confident" that Canada at the end of the day will have environmental legislation that is commensurate

with that in U.S." However, he added, the legislation leaves open the possibility of abuse. "Once you have protective authorities in the legislation, there is always the possibility for mischief in the application in a way that is prejudicial to Canada."

The provisions would apply to goods, ranging from steel and paper to pulp and paper, from a nation whose rules are not deemed "comparable" with that of the United States. Others may be a self-proclaimed environmentalist, but the provision holds the potential for a substantial economic penalty—or at least allowing Washington a very heavy hand in the writing of climate rules of its trading partners. Witness Prentice. "Like beauty and fairness, the definition of 'more measurable' will apparently lie in the eye of the American beholder."

For as much as Canadians love Obama, it is possible he doesn't love as much his climate-change legislation comes at a time of severe protectionist sentiment in Congress and an erosion of trust in Canada in response to "Buy American" measures in the U.S.'s \$100-billion stimulus bill. When he met with Harper, Obama vowed that his administration would adhere to commitments in international trade



'GOODWILL ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH. FRIENDS DON'T CUT EACH OTHER OFF AT THE KNEES.'

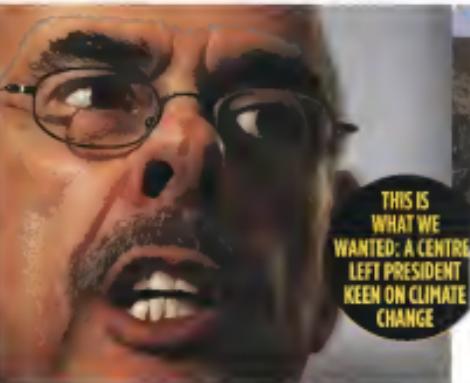
agreements. But American manufacturers and states have demanded only American-made steel and manufactured goods for their procurement contracts. Canadian analysts point to this as one of the reasons why including U.S. suppliers from financial contracts violates the Harper government's own response to an intended trade agreement with Washington over four months.

Steadily, the Bay American provision was beaten in Congress, the issue body that's been taken by Obama to work on the main details of the climate bill. So the President's position on Canada may be less antagonistic than a case of not being noticed. Rather, it's a warning for a country to rely on the U.S. for 70 per cent of its exports. "The problems for foreign countries is they need the President to exercise leadership and narrate on the legislature. He's still going to be focused on sectional interests," says Chris Sands, a specialist on Canada-U.S. relations at the National Bureau, a Washington think tank. "I think there was a natural exchange of goodwill in February, which was encouraging, but goodwill alone is not enough if it doesn't translate into action. Friends don't let each other off the hook." He adds: "We are running out of the honeymoon period with Obama both in the U.S. and Canada where people are willing to cut him slack. And the frustrations are beginning to build." Of perhaps Canadians are getting what they asked for: a center-left politician who promised to do something about climate change and even named about reviving NAFTA. After all, it was his spokesman, John McCallum, who in the middle of a presidential campaign travelled to Canada to give a speech defending free trade.

On a trip to Niagara Falls on June 11, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met with Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon and defended the Bay American provisions, saying the bill is "not being enforced in any way that is inconsistent with our international trade obligations." Technically, this is correct. NAFTA does not prescribe standards like the Bay American provisions. It was the Canadian provinces, in fact, that chose not to bring government procurement into the deal in 1993.

Clinton, however, said the administration would "take a hard look to see what rules we can do to ensure that the free flow of trade continues." And earlier this month, Canadian diplomats from across the U.S. were round up and deployed to Capitol Hill for a series of close-to-blows meetings with lawmakers and staff members, armed with rosters of individual states and congressional districts that showed projected numbers of American jobs that depend on trade with Canada. But the battle is over to be a long one. For its part, the U.S. Chancery

of Commerce wrote a letter to Obama arguing that U.S. steel and wind-energy equipment alone stand to lose US\$8 billion if the provisions alone are enforced, while hundreds of thousands of steelworkers could lose their jobs because their employer produces some of its steel abroad. Meanwhile, at least two other bills in Congress are copying the language and its supporters want the provisions to remain intact long after the election ends. Stephen Harper has called this a canary provision—the bugbear we have to global economic recovery."



THE CLIMATE BILL'S author, Harry Wissner (left), former Alberta lobbyist Murray Smith

**THIS IS
WHAT WE
WANTED: A CENTRE
LEFT PRESIDENT
KEEN ON CLIMATE
CHANGE**



the White House and pressed them to pass the bill out of the committee by the end of May. That time Alberta got a reprieve. The bill passed out of committee by Obama's deadline, but the fastidious provisions triggered an order to review enough votes. Nevertheless, the aim of a national low-carbon fuel standard is not dead. "The expectation is the Democratic leadership in the House will attempt to put the low-carbon proposal back in the bill," says Constance, the lobbyist. Whether there is enough support

to pass it is unclear. "The issue is not going to go away [Oil sands] are viewed as a strategic and very big entities are going to be on the table and the main hope is a lot of people," says Steve Holts, a Washington lawyer who helped to draft the energy law and advised several provincial governments.

The potential impact of the U.S. legislation goes another dimension. For Canada it is to see if incoming large-energy customers come up before setting in motion its own legislation—or head in that direction early. But Obama brought in all the Democrats on the energy committee to a personal meeting at

the Copenhagen meeting before the Senate voted on its own climate-change bill. He has had to wait a year to sign it into law for the mid-December United Nations climate-change conference in Copenhagen, both to show that the U.S. is making progress and to pressure countries such as China and India to do the same.

Between then and now, the bill has to go through eight other powerful House committees, and the Senate has to draft, debate and pass its own legislation that will have to be reconciled with the House version. There will be a lot of horse-trading to be done, in other words, and everyone will feel besieged and angry by Obama, many of whom will be open to interpretation when various executive agencies, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Senate Republicans, in the oil patch argue Ottawa should wait to see what Washington comes up with. "There are so many uncertainties still lingering over this issue that it has to be a final design without seeing the impact on trade, commerce, and energy markets which would be present," says Merritt Smith, a former Alberta energy minister and former representative in Washington who now sits on the boards of several energy companies. Gary Mar, Alberta's representative in Washington, says he expects the Canadian government to demand changes to the Americans' "The concern is that if you don't have a system that is recognized as comparable then you get to the possibility of the U.S. putting up all kinds of

trade barriers—things like carbon taxes imposed outside the U.S." But at the same time, Alberta's environment minister, Bob Bernier, warns that Canada should "not get as far ahead of the U.S. in implementation of a climate-change initiative that we become uncompetitive and impose significant costs on our economy."

The potential plan to have a national green-house-gas emissions plan for all sectors of the economy before the Copenhagen meeting. The details of the regulations will be worked out in 2010, with an eye on what the U.S. is doing, and will be implemented in 2011. "These decisions will be made on the basis of Canada's national interests, but we will be fully mindful of what is going on with our trading-partner," he says. "It is certainly the case that we will want to know what U.S. legislation looks like."

Meanwhile, Alberta is engaged in a delicate state of trying to influence America's domestic climate-change legislation to go easy on oil sands while still trying to look green. Mar means that Alberta won't be opposed to cap-and-trade or even a low-carbon fuel standard. "We don't necessarily object—it depends on what principles are set in the bill," he says. The best case scenario for Alberta would be a bill that does not single out oil sands or unconventional fuels for tougher treatment, and an incentive that would recognize Canada's own efforts, whatever they end up being. "As impractical as the U.S. system is, so far, Rob Mercer thinks the province is not getting a fair shake. "We believe we are not getting a fair reflection in the court of world public opinion about where we are doing here in Alberta. We are more exploited and responsible than what is being portrayed. But we can do better. And we are trying," Mercer told Maclean's.

He wants American legislators to know that Alberta has a \$15-per-tonne tax on CO₂ and is putting the money into an emissions-reduction fund aimed at developing clean-energy capture and sequestration technology, not to mention billions more in climate-change initiatives. "Our journey is continuing," Mercer says. "We continued to stay at the table in渥太华 in Washington. We simply have to be cognizant of the fact that we are a relatively small player in this giant wheel."

A Alberta has assembled a coalition of officials and hired lobbyists—including former American ambassador to Canada—to track the measure through Congress. At a cost of US\$1-million per month, Alberta has hired two firms—DLA Piper, with former U.S. ambassador Jim Blewett, and McClellan, with Paul Fraser, whome

minor official at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, to provide "strategic advice" and to help negotiate the legislation. (Saskatchewans has also proven to be the west, hiring David Wilkins, British ambassador to Canada, to search its oil sands interests.) This collaboration has drawn fire from U.S. energy ministers. "It's encouraging to see there is actually support in promoting the tar sands when they know it's incompatible and self-undermines our efforts to address one of the serious threats our planet faces," says Barack Obama, who recently visited Canada and Alberta officials popping up at hearings all over Capitol Hill. But because the other side of the debate says the Canadian effort is not nearly enough. "We need help," says Caron. "I think it would be beneficial for the Canadian government to get involved in this battle. We have to get around to every legislation to educate them, answer any questions they have, respond to segments in favour of low-carbon fuel standards that Wm. Neuman and Pelon and others are making. It's hard work. It requires resources I think would be money well spent."

Alberta's and Canada's representatives are currently touring two more states. One, by the respected Cara

THE OIL SANDS WILL BE HIT, BUT SO WILL TRADE IN GOODS LIKE STEEL, CEMENT AND TOYS

the fall of 2006 when the Department of Public Works placed Jim and Janet Sandrock for the first time. "It was devastating for us," Janet says now, "devastating."

At the time Sandrock said there was nothing they could do to prevent the inevitable. In March 2007, their neighbour across the street became the first of the 12 to accept the government's offer [according to the Public Accusers of Canada, she signed away her house and five acres for \$166,000]. Seven months later, another neighbour agreed to sell his 10 acres, and everything on it, for \$481,000. With his neighbours, the Sandrocks reluctantly agreed to follow suit. "You have to look at the big picture and make a sensible decision," Jim says. "I don't care how much money you've got, you can't fight the government."

Rather than risk expropriation, the Sandrocks spent months negotiating a \$2.75-million deal that ensured their farming operation would be moved to nearby parcels of land. Ottawa paid a market rate for the land [approximately \$3,000 per acre] while costing out nearly double that to cover long lists of expenses from relocating grain bins to rebuilding barns. Uprooting their entire lives was a grueling process. "A lot of tears," Janet says—but they knew it was the smart decision. "We were in their way," she says. "The bottom line is they're going to take it, so you have to co-operate."

Apart from the obvious inconvenience, the owners who didn't want to co-operate are at odds over one thing: selling price. The government hand a third-party firm to assess each property, but is that fine? In the minister's made clear, most owners "expressed dissatisfaction with the appraised values." Among the dissatisfied is Leon Collins, who owns 10 acres near the east end of the rectangle. The 71-year-old says his lot was appraised for less than \$10,000—an act, despite the fact that similar properties in the area have recently sold for up to \$16,000 more. "The appraisal was worth pennies," he says. "I told [the government representative] I'd buy all the farmland the county of Hastings had for sale. That's what I did." Public Works called Collins a second offer in the file. He won't reveal the specific dollar figure, except to say he threw the letter in the garbage.

Another owner, who spoke to Maclean's

on the condition that his name not be printed, also thinks the feds are lobbing hard. "There is no way that I'm going to sell at the price they offered, so what can I do?" he says. "They're the government, and the government has a lot more power than we do."

He is right. According to Canada's expropriation laws, Ottawa is under no obligation to pay anything more than fair market value. But because the feds always prefer to negotiate a settlement rather than dictate rules, they are free to stipulate degree of compensation the lowest to offer up to 15 per cent above the appraised amount, as well as out-of-pocket expenses such as moving costs, legal fees and title insurance. In the end, though, the government just can't budge up with a blank cheque. It is taxpayer money, after all.

Ottawa CAN'T JUST WRITE A BLANK CHEQUE. IT'S TAXPAYERS' MONEY.



JANET AND JIM Sandrock: "You can't fight the government."

Phil Jordan understands that "He didn't" was the lottery when the military chose his land for JTF2. But he is rapidly得出 that the appraised value (\$44,000 for his house and the 69 acres) doesn't reflect the true value. The group alone—two acres, with no apartment studio for his band—was impenetrable, he says, as is the suite he built for his son, another "They think this is a place to live and we can just buy another one down the road," says Jordan, a welder by trade. "But if we took their offer we'd have to leave a house on our service that isn't necessarily ours. We'd definitely put it in his dad's, there is no doubt about it."

"What's the number one rule of real estate?"

BOB RAE'S SHORT TRIP TO SRI LANKA

I think like the Sri Lankan government needs to give its head a shake. If you want to be considered a democracy, you want to be considered an open and transparent society, you need to be open...—Liberal MP Bob Rae [responding to Sri Lanka's driving like the wind. The Liberal foreign affairs critic was detailed and departed by Sri Lankan authorities last week. Officials there cited Rae's alleged support of Tamil Tiger rebels.]



THE PÉQUISTE PICK

Montreal's leading mayoralty candidate is a hard-left separatist

BY MARTIN PATRICKSON • For most Montrealers, the search of a competent police assault only as far as the trials and the trials. As long as both are taken care of, the people don't much care what's in charge. In 2005, barely a third of eligible voters bothered casting a municipal ballot. This November's election was going to be a variation on the theme, putting Montreal's charismatic Mayor Tremblay against his opponent Bertrand Labonté. Early polling suggested Tremblay would rule again in a landslide on a wave of indifference.

Not anymore. Labonté recently ended his spot as leader of Vision Montreal to become Hervé, a former Parti Québécois minister with a well-known name for the jugular. Much to the chagrin of Mayor Tremblay, Montreal's police are suddenly discriminated against a familiar Quebec staple: language politics.

Habot has been a源久立and hard and the PC/PQ's left flank for nearly four decades. A former social worker and lawyer, she joined the party in 1970 and promptly led a tax-avoidance drive of its office workers. Even though Bertrand Labonté had always aligned himself with the party's unions, he didn't appreciate the move. So when Habot was first elected in 1981, he fixed himself on the backbenches. Appointed immigration minister in 1984, she resigned less than a month later, along with other ministers, in protest of Labonté's selling off state-owned enterprises.

She responded to Jacques Parizeau's government 10 years later, and immediately after narrowly oversee the forced mergers between 2001 under prime minister Jean Charest. These mergers ended many in the province, particularly Montreal's English communities, singling out Westmount. Habot suggested "the

search of colonialism" was writing from the city's workplace, largely English neighbourhoods. (Habot made a point of learning French fluently, though she has difficulty conversing in it.) She also claimed she has difficulty convincing her to do it, either, other than viewing to fix the various messes she says Tremblay has made during his eight-year term.

Perhaps more confounding than the end-of-the-pipeline popularity of a sovereignist politician in a city that voted overwhelmingly against Quebec's separation in 1995 is Habot's choice of backdrop. Bertrand Labonté, who would likely be second on command in a Habot government, as research indicates who can work for Paul Martin and who can bring ties with Montreal's business community. Then again, straight is a perfect fit. Labonté can please those put off by Habot's Progester past.

Moreover, Montreal's anglophone community, one of Tremblay's strongest bases of support, has effectively rallied itself in 2006, 14 communities, all anglophone speaking, have come together to "rebuild" from the city, reuniting them in their own municipal elections. As a result, today's "emergent" Montreal is a Swiss cheese collection of baroughs in which Anglos have lost a say-but before. Removed at the top, though, Tremblay remains a formidable opponent. Her voters are older homeowners, male demographic that can traditionally be trusted to actually cast a ballot on election day. She also has an unusual support amongst those anglophones who are still eligible to vote.

"This has to be a two-horse race," a Union Montréal strategists told Maclean's, worried that an anti-English sovereigntist party will spring up and sweep Tremblay's nose. One potential candidate, who has rallied for Tremblay, has nonetheless fallen into line behind the mayor. "I don't want to be known as the guy who beat Habot," he told Maclean's.

Habot also must contend with the fact that fewer and fewer Quebecers, especially Montrealers, believe in the notion of it. A recent La Presse poll found that 75 per cent of Quebecers don't believe Quebec sovereignty will ever happen. Fifty-four per cent, meanwhile, are against the stink entirely. Should she be elected, Habot will have to either something she is not yet used to: Montreal's growing indifference to anything going on beyond the curb. ■



LOUISE HABOT, once anti-Bertrand Labonté's candidate over his softening on sovereignty

SHE ONCE SAID SHE DETECTED THE 'STENCH OF COLONIALISM' WAITING FROM WESTMOUNT



HOW MUCH has Stephen Harper's government actually spent on stimulus? Who knows?

Stop the shovels



ANDREW COYNE

If by the time you read this, Ontario has not been plunged into another disaster, it will be a blow to the corygrapher everywhere. At one point there was serious prospect of an early campaign being fought on whether billions of federal cash had been "committed," "approved," "announced" or, in fact, spent. As the senator might have been:

"To be sure, in a government's second report on 'Canada's Economic Action Plan,' the proximate cause of this collapse was all of these terms and more, in an effort to impress the public with how much spending has been 'ratcheted' out the door" since January's hasty budget. The effect is quite dizzying, even without the reverberating of spending programs with some names on wholly different timelines while the government further obscures its intentions.

Citizens attempting to come to grips with the magnitude of the government's efforts to "stimulus" the economy rarely notice which member to be more impressed by the \$15-billion (over seven years) Building Canada Plan, not to be confused with the \$8-billion Building Canada Fund, or the \$13.4-billion (every year) infrastructure stimulus. But I feel it oversimplifies. The \$13.4-billion budgeted for infrastructure already

has a "stimulus value" of \$16.5 billion, and that's before you count the \$11 billion in "assured, provincial and territorial" action.

With me so far?

Okay. Looking just at the current fiscal year—appropriately, one supposes, if the point of the exercise is to speed the money as fast as you can—or say \$4.4 billion not for major infrastructure projects (the so-called "shovels in the ground") that are the object of particular reverence among the stimulus cultists (but not of others)? Of that, the government says, about \$1.9 billion has been "committed." And how much has actually been, you know, spent? Not a clue.

Not that it matters. For all Michael Ignatieff's arguments to make this the defining issue between him and Stephen Harper, rarely what is more significant is their firm unity of belief than this sort of "stimulus." Is the case for our economy off? And yet if the opposition is right, and hardly any of the money has actually been spent, is it only to show how potent the whole business is? For, quite aside by any stretch actually having the ground, the economy has already begun to stabilize, even to show signs of improvement.

Whichever headline tell us that GDP shrank in the first quarter at an annualized rate of 3.4 per cent, the worst quarterly performance since 1991, that's looking in the rear-view mirror. It does not tell us what is happening today. Look at my current figures, and you get a better picture of where we're headed

Housing starts are up, as are housing prices. Retail sales have been rising for three consecutive months. Manufacturing shipments, after suffering huge declines through the fall and winter, seem now stabilized. Savings growth has been estimated, while the threat of deflation has eased. Even employment appears to have bottomed out.

The same signs of stimulus recovery are in evidence elsewhere. The latest figures out of the United States, on housing, construction and industrial production, are encouraging, if not exactly robust. Commodity prices are rising, at least some confidence. There's a reason stock markets have been soaring over the last three months. But that reason has nothing to do with any "stimulus" spending that may or may not be somewhere in the pipeline. Instead, look to credit markets, where interest rates spread—the premium richer borrowers must pay over safe government bonds—have narrowed markedly. More than anything else, that reflects efforts by governments and central banks to provide liquidity to financial institutions and otherwise ease credit.

These have been quite massive, and dwarf anything done on the fiscal side, certainly in this country. As of December, for example, the Bank of Canada had provided some \$40 billion in additional liquidity. Another \$30 billion was injected through the government's purchase of insured mortgage assets from the banks. By this and other means, interest rates have been helped to normalize closer to the bank's five per cent range. That is the stuff of which recoveries are made, at least in the real world. As opposed to the kind of imagined thinking our political parties have adopted, in which a 6.6-billion economy can be hampered around merely because the government spends a few billion dollars on hydroelectricity and overpasses.

Which is to say that such spending has no effect. All real potential risk to considerable have. Indeed, what is most striking is how rapidly the predicted negative effects of deficit finance have begun to show themselves. Already, seven weeks after the budget was passed, the deficit projection has had to be revised upwards. Already, monthly inflation rates are pushing rates back up. Already, the talk of the increases that will be needed to tighten the budget back to balance. Right down to zero, anyone?

In short, while the stimulus spending may arrive too late to do much about the current recession, it may be just in time to worsen the mess. ■

ON THE WEB Former Andrew Coyne: visit his blog at www.thespectator.ca/andrewcoyne

Why the poor aren't poorer after all

BY TOM HESKEFFER • Many studies have come to depressing conclusions that the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer—but according to a new report from the Fraser Institute, it's not happening here



The study says the consumption rate of the poor isn't declining

In *The Economic Well-Being of Canadians Is There a Growing Gap?*, Chris Sarlo, an economist at Ryerson University, argues that most studies of income gaps have been too narrow. The accepted figures show that the income gap between rich and poor has grown by nine per cent since 1969 but Sarlo says those reports don't take into account the "underground economy" of unreported income common in the arts, renovation and hospitality industries. So he values that economy at up to \$13 billion a year, enough to actually缩小 the statistics on incomes.

To overcome that shortcoming, rather than adapting income stats, Sarlo's report analyzes rates of consumption. By doing so, he finds that Canadians with incomes in the lowest tier per capita have actually purchased higher numbers of "luxury items" (things like air conditioners and dishwashers) than the previous quintile of life than those in the highest tier per capita since 1961. Since that consumption rate isn't declining, he says, it shows that the poor aren't getting poorer. "Given the data we have, as limited as it may be, it's just not obvious that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer."

Not everyone agrees with Sarlo's happy conclusion. Armine Yalnizyan, an economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, says the rich should report their incomes set at such a poor rate. She also criticizes Sarlo's emphasis on consumption, claiming that the poor can afford more time-saving consumer goods because of a decrease in the price of electronics, not because their incomes are staying par with "keeping up the skills to define more the issue of inequality," she says. ■

School fights to promote Jesuit values

BY TOM HESKEFFER • Can a Catholic high school teach students that all religions are equal? Paul Donoway, the principal of Montreal's Loyola High School, says it can't be done. So the boys-only Jesuit school is taking the position in court over new ethics and religion culture programs.

The new course was introduced by the Ministry of Education to teach about various religious traditions in Quebec society, with the goal of increasing tolerance among students. It teaches about Presbyterians and Catholics, as well as Hindus, native spiritualities and other religions.

Paul Donoway says his teachers can't deliver a religious course without a Catholic perspective—a perspective that promotes Catholicism ahead of other beliefs. "Our parents and their sons go to us because of our mission and the values that we hold as a Catholic, Jesuit school," he wrote in a letter to the ministry. "It is our fundamental that we cannot honestly undertake the program without compromising some of those values."

Donoway asked for an exemption from the program's program before going to court, suggesting Loyola's existing religious curriculum is an alternative. But Quebec Education Minister Michelle Courchesne has made it clear that a class tilted toward one religion is not acceptable.

"Part of the mandate of the course is to present religion in an even-handed way," says Daniel Woodward, a professor who consulted the drafting of the new program.

"The school has an obligation to educate children to the Catholic faith, it is definitely a part of their mandate; it is to present all religions in an even-handed way."

Loyola's court proceedings have just finished and may be decided before a decision is handed down. But Woodward says Quebec courts have historically been averse to overturning provincial legislation—if changes are, come this fall, Loyola will be teaching that all religions are equal, whether it likes it or not. ■

Fluoride safety fears rock Sarnia

BY RACHEL ENOKIESTA • For 40 years, the tiny Ontario town of Sarnia has been debating whether it's safe to add fluoride to their drinking water. This November, the issue may finally be put to rest.

Like many Canadian water supplies, Lambton began adding fluoride to its water four decades ago as an inexpensive way to ward off tooth decay. But for just as long, some have opposed the practice in uncertainty—and possibly downright. "It's been an issue every year since fluoride was put in the 'Vids," says Mike Bradle, the mayor of Sarnia, Ont., which shares the water supply. Then, last year, Bradle came forward with a report arguing that adding fluoride does have adverse effects, and recommended a decrease in allowed levels.

That's one of the reasons Lambton Mayor Gord Moore is ready to see fluoride go. Fluoridation was invented during the war, he claims, when fluoride was being used as a component in the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "After the war, somebody came up with the idea that it was good for our teeth," Moore says. He sees the effects of over-fluoridation—fluosis, or, discolouration of tooth enamel—on his grand children. "This stuff is poison," he warns.

But fluoride dismisses those claims as pseudoscience. Steve "right wing conspiracy" Fluoride, a professor who consults the drafting of the new program, says the data is inconclusive. "The school has an obligation to educate children to the Catholic faith, it is definitely a part of their mandate; it is to present all religions in an even-handed way."

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Poison or dental fluorosis?

The mayor can't decide.

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We have finally learned to fight'

Iran's regime took the election, but it also set the stage for radical upheaval

BY MICHAEL PETROU • The students at Tehran University were trapped between the men with clubs and those who

Last Sunday night and early Monday morning, some 300 police and members of the paramilitary Basij militia stormed the university's dormitory, where students had protested against what millions of Iranians, along with most independent analysts, believe was a stolen election. Hard-line incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was declared the runaway winner, with his reformist leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, describing his victory as a "civic achievement."

But the outcome was announced before many of the votes could have been counted. And the declared results gave little solace to the protesters on the ground, with Ahmadinejad supposedly winning in the regional and ethnic强holds of his opponents. While one poll taken three weeks before the election suggested Ahmadinejad was leading, polls closer to the election date indicated that reformist candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi had surged ahead.

Even had the votes been counted accurately, this would not have been a truly democratic process. All candidates must be approved by the country's religious establishment, which does not allow liberals, leftists, and secularists to run. Like the apparent young people who drove Iranian into the streets in numbers that have not been seen since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Mousavi marched in support of Mousavi, who promised more liberty without directly challenging Iran's religious leadership. Mousavi officially received 51 per cent of the popular vote.

The regime responded by sending police and Basij motorcycle enthusiasts to the crowd and beat them with clubs. Then they began shooting. The BBC obtained footage of a Basij member firing an AK-47 assault rifle into a crowd of protesters; Iranian state radio reported seven deaths and claimed that "thugs" had tried to storm a military post. Hospital authorities reported eight deaths.

And so, on Sunday night, when the police and Basij charged up the stairs of their Tehran University dormitory, the students had nowhere to escape but out their upper-floor windows. Some jumped. Others threw stones and shouted "Death to the dictator!" When the attackers reached the students,

PROTESTERS turned out to numbers not seen since the Islamic Revolution of 1979



how to bring them down. I think if we work for Missouri, the spaces would be more open and we could continue our struggle in other movements, such as those of women and students."

THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC HAS REACHED A crossroads, says Mohammad Tavassoli, a professor of history and near and eastern civilizations at the University of Tehran, and in an interview with Maclean's, "We are entering a period of really deep crisis." Before the poll, the institutions of the Islamic Republic will remain, and go beyond, a simple role of Islamicizing the society and begin a new phase of development.

When police rushed a university dorm, the students had no escape. Some jumped.



Offenders can expect to appear before the police with either their own legal representation or a solicitor provided by the state.

The next thing to do is to shed our beliefs. If all of us kick our beliefs off, this regime would

Sternik, a 27-year-old from Orenburg in the northwest of Iraq, said the city was surrounded and reported that one demonstrator was killed—a claim that was not possible to verify.

Some of the demonstrators said they support Meawati and his platform of reform. Others want to overturn him. One of them says "My grievance is not only against Ahmadiyyah but this bloody regime," a 21-year-old journalist said. "The question is



"We could hear shooting, but we kept shouting, "Don't be afraid. We are all together here."



HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN ARE AT RISK. ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS MAY TAKE 20 YEARS TO BE APPARENT.

constitutional election," he told *Newsweek*.

If they can't settle the wagons at the elite level, then they'll never be able to get a hold

several powerful allies in former presidents Muhammed Khanam and Akbar Hashem Tarzai. Khanam chairs two powerful government bodies—the Assembly of Council and the Rapporteur of the Assembly. Council Khanam, on the other hand, sits next to the Revolutionary Guards, the Basij, the security forces, and many conservative clerics. Akbar Hashem's closest allies include the leaders of the streets. Seamus Maloney, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, told Macleod: "The ability of Iran's ruling mullahs to make it wagons in doubt, because they have a political muscle like no prime minister during their war with Iraq, is very useful to gain momentum in the streets and defy the orders of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei."

According to Farzan Akbarian, a professor of international law at McGill University, how-

ever, the "seismic shift" that has occurred is not the power struggle within the political establishment, but the fact that the Iranian people have so forcefully demanded change. "However much there may be factional politics among Moussavi and Ahmadinejad and Soltani and others, underneath lies the ground a churning," he said in an interview with *Mashhad*. "It's a country like Iran, within demographic limits, with its socio-economic level of development... you can not simply rule through intimidation and terror. You need to have legitimacy."

My opportunity, ridding us already fissured elements, by
us freedom of expression by
the media, by blocking small
area communication, and by
club wielding groups against us
fully demonstrating it's own,
the public has lost much of the
money it once possessed. Millions
are unwilling to accept that

"I would say that I didn't have people and that they would never say dad in 1979," said Maranek, a field beautify urban worker in Texas prison wings. "We have finally



LEARNED China will keep lending to the U.S. as long as bond prices stay up. The prospect of a flood of ballooning deficits has understandably started to make the country's lenders a little nervous. The U.S. raised money by selling Treasury securities, largely to foreign buyers. Lately, these buyers have been increasing wary of the quality of those maturities, which were once considered the safest bet in the investing world. As a result, the U.S. Treasury auction has been weak, leading to slight rises in interest rates—especially on long-term bonds. Late last month, well-known hedge guru Bill Gross, founder of Pacific Investment Management Co., warned the U.S. could eventually lose its AAA investment-grade ranking.

The largest buyer of U.S. debt is China, which held \$700 billion worth of Treasury securities as of March. Recently it has openly expressed concern about America's ability to repay the loans. "Of course we are concerned about the safety of our assets," the Chinese Foreign Min. Jiafu Zhao, at a news conference earlier this year. "I'd like to take the opportunity here to emphasize the United States to honor its words, stay a credible nation and ensure the safety of Chinese assets."

These are the kinds of politically loaded statements that keep Uncle Sam's balance sheet in the government's red. "It's hard to overestimate the massive spending spree we've had in the United States over the past few years," says Brian Riedl, a budget analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a Washington-based research organization. Under Obama's budget, the debt-to-GDP ratio will double to 82 per cent by the end of the decade—a level not seen since 1945, when the U.S. was recovering from the Second World War.

But that's not the whole story. The budget spending is still to come. With 75 million taxpayers losing benefits a year, that figure will rapidly worsen, as more seniors will receive relatively flat while spending soars as demand grows for benefits such as health care for an aging population. The U.S. debt-to-GDP is at \$2.5 trillion and will hit \$4 trillion within the decade, according to the Congressional Budget Office—a sobering figure so large that it will nearly match the entire yearly output of the world's most powerful country. In short, America is about to go broke and every Western country, including Canada, will pay the price.

These days, a vindictive Uncle Sam is on the attack, warning about the ramifications of the U.S. is just how quickly and easily the country could self-harm if he doesn't do something about the debt. Back in 2006, the Congressional Budget Office was estimating that by now, the U.S. should be running a healthy government deficit in all of 2008, and stimulus programs have added another \$100 billion to the government's tab. "It's hard to overestimate the massive spending spree we've had in the United States over the past few years," says Brian Riedl, a budget analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a Washington-based research organization. Under Obama's budget, the debt-to-GDP ratio will double to 82 per cent by the end of the decade—a level not seen since 1945, when the U.S. was recovering from the Second World War.

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These days mean that even if Obama's stimulus spending packages wind down as planned and the economy recovers, he has little choice but to push policies that have piled debt on top of debt. Nearly \$1 trillion has been spent on banks and the auto makers (both) about as much as the entire

CAN THEY PAY IT BACK?

The U.S. is about to go broke and they'll take us down with them

BY COLIN CAMPBELL • When Peter Schiff was making the rounds on U.S. cable news shows in 2007, warning about the collapse of the housing market, anchors and fellow guests literally laughed in his face when he lashed into his gloomy predictions. That kind of recklessness could never happen, they said. The housing market had solid ground in those rosy economic days, Schiff, the president of Darton, Green & Euro Pacific Capital, was reportedly a successful broker who'd gone off the deep end.

These days, a vindictive Uncle Sam is on the attack, warning about the ramifications of the U.S. is just how quickly and easily the country could self-harm if he doesn't do something about the debt. Back in 2006, the Congressional Budget Office was estimating that by now, the U.S. should be running a healthy

annual surplus—or fact. It figured that when added together, the surpluses between 2001 and 2011 would total \$6 trillion. At the time, it seemed like a reasonable projection. After all, in 2001 the government recorded a surplus amounting to \$128 billion. But over compact, things happened since then that derailed the U.S. into a very different future: the dot-com bust and George W. Bush. The recession that followed in 2001 cut tax revenues to half and spending—as usual—wasn't far behind, taking a good bite out of the otherwise balanced budget. At the same time, newly elected president George W. Bush—emboldened by the surplus he inherited when he came to office—proceeded to dole out steep and wide-ranging tax cuts, which cut revenue by about five percent. That was followed by new \$55-billion drug benefit program in 2003. To top it all off, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan caused defense spending to explode. (The bill for those was \$140 billion.) In just four years, America's surplus had grown not diminished and turned into a \$400-billion annual deficit. Sure, they initially showed signs of recovery, but when the recession hit in 2008, the deficit quickly plummeted back down to around \$400 billion.

President Barack Obama hasn't helped matters. Back with a never-recession deficit but little choice but to push policies that have piled debt on top of debt. Nearly \$1 trillion has been spent on banks and the auto makers (both) about as much as the entire

annual deficit—and it's still to come. The current recession, he argues, is only the beginning of a longer economic recovery. The American economy has been destroyed by years of reckless spending and borrowing. And now, the U.S. government is so deeply in debt that it can't print its way out of the mess. We're going to come to a point where the rest of the world—China, Canada, Mexico, Australia, and every Western country, including Canada, will pay the price.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID HORNIGRADY

The day of reckoning is still to come. Inflation will run wild and everyone will suffer.

Many scoff at the idea that China will suddenly say "no more" to the U.S. After all, the two countries have had a mutually beneficial relationship for years. China lends money to the U.S. and the U.S. buys masses of consumer goods from China. That's true, it's a long-standing relationship and many doubt that China would want to upset the man who still controls so large an acreage. "They'd like to keep lending indefinitely unless there's a massive shift in the argument that real estate prices have been rising, so they'll cut interest," he says. "Nothing that is sustainable can go on forever."

But the thing is, China doesn't have to entirely cut off the U.S. to raise problems. Even if China decided to pull back slightly,

ECONOWATCH



After worrying for months that confidence would never return, new financial gurus find themselves dealing with an overconfidence. For the past several weeks, experts and economists have been doing their best to temper optimism, and step on a few of the celebrated "green shoots" that have dominated the discussion on Wall Street since March. There was Mark Carney, governor of the Bank of Canada, last week warning that those green shoots were still weak and fragile. "We shouldn't underestimate the scale of the challenge," he told a gathering of business leaders and academics in Montreal. So to the audience, CBS surveyed central bank managers around the world who collectively manage US\$5.5 trillion in assets and found they are highly skeptical of the idea that we're in the late stages of this economic slump. They expect interest rates to stay grounded at least six months and consider unemployment a huge and continuing threat.

But for those who make their living swapping stocks, bonds and contracts, none of that skepticism matters as long as institutions remain in their favor. Consumer confidence in up stocks have been rising for four months. Long-term bond purchases have fallen to fill. Commodity prices are recovering. And all of that is happening despite the fact that economic activity is still feeble.

This is the root of a perverse dilemma: rising confidence is essential for the economy to recover, but too much optimism can soon turn the biggest threat to that ascent into a hindrance. The higher the market climbs, the more extended stock valuations become and the more difficult it gets for central banks to hold down interest rates. All that makes the uncertainties more likely to dampen expectations and surprises. Like asteroids following a killer earthquake, another collapse would be as devastating as the original event, letting a financial bomb and shock波 roll rolling from last autumn's crash.

The risks were laid out Monday, when Canadian and US stocks nosedived by almost three per cent in a single day for little apparent reason. That kind of volatility is quickly becoming a fact of life on world markets, as traders keep a finger poised above the panic button, ready to flee the market at the first signs of real trouble. Troubled big companies, whether round of mortgage defaults or dismal corporate earnings, for example.

For now, all the central bankers and economists can do is try to keep a lid on the gathering optimism without scaring it entirely.

OVERDRAWN by Jason Logman

CLARIFICATION:



(BANKERS BEEN ARE LIVING IN MY BACKYARD)

LONDON (GETTY IMAGES) / BLOOMBERG

THE GOOD NEWS

Onwards U.S.

A study by CIBC Royal Bank pegged disposable income in Canada to rise twice as fast as the U.S. As of the first quarter this year, incomes were up more than 11 per cent, or \$1,600, from 2004. In addition to gloating about the past, CIBC says we should expect the gap to widen even further after the recession ends.

They spenders

The barometer for signs of life among consumers continues. In May, U.S. retail sales rose 0.5 per cent, ending a three-month decline. Sharp increases in car prices have lured shoppers back into showrooms. (A similar trend is play-



THE BAD NEWS

How fast things change

Just two months after the World Bank came out with a dire forecast that the global economy would contract 1.7 percent this year, things have deteriorated substantially. It now says the world economy will likely shrink nearly three per cent in 2009.

Big Five blues

They may be bailed out the world over for their strength, but Canada's biggest businesses still feel the pinch from the recession. An analysis by Bloomberg found that last quarter, Royal Bank of Canada, Bank of Nova Scotia and Bank of Montreal had nearly 4,000 jobs in a bad situation. Still, things are far worse in the U.S., where Bank of America Corp. alone has cut 46,100 jobs since 2007.



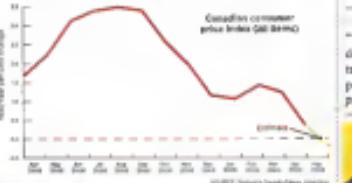
Empty houses

There's no shortage of glass doors in the U.S. housing market. Unfortunately, they're the windswept spouting up on the front lawns of all the newly foreclosed homes. In May, 321,450 homes were foreclosed, up 18 per cent from the year before, according to Fidelity.

A WEEKLY SCORECARD ON THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY IN NORTH AMERICA AND BEYOND

GRAPH OF THE WEEK

INFLATION GOES NEGATIVE — according to TD Economics' Canadian consumer price inflation went negative in May for the first time in 10 years. This marks the first full-year-over-full-year decline in the price of a basket of commonly purchased goods since 1984, and many expect the deflationary trend to worsen, despite the rising price of oil.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES



► Flying in corporate jets is still an extravagance that's favored upon. Caress Aircraft Co., the largest builder of business jets in the U.S., said last month it would cancel orders for its planes. It was forced to lay off 1,300 workers last week. In the past seven months, it has laid off half its order backlog.

► Palm introduced a new smartphone, the Pre, while Apple unveiled another version of its phone, called the iPhone 3GS. People can't enough of mobile gadgets, even when their \$100-plus price tags. Palm sold 100,000 devices in their first five days on the market and Apple started shipping one phones to China last week.

► For years, Convergent Global Communications has been fighting injunctions and legal battles. This week its case was finally scheduled to be heard in an Ontario court. But at the last minute, the company and the hearing will be postponed until this fall. That will give it time to deal with more pressing shareholder struggles to avoid bankruptcy and instructure a roughly \$4 billion debt load.

► Interested in buying an company? General Motors is searching out buyers for many of its brands, and you don't need to be a big, undivided corporation to get in on the bidding. After unloading Hawker and Saab, GM is set to close a deal to sell its Saab division to Scania, a Swedish company that was founded in 1891 by a 22-year-old oil enthusiast. It will just has just 45 full-time employees, who make a handful of luxury supercars each year.

BUY AMERICAN

"Buy American" has become the rallying cry for using industrial tools of the border as corporate politicians try to ensure their billion-dollar stimulus spending stays locked in the U.S. of A. But around the world, protectionist sentiments are rising and many experts are stepping forward to warn that, political economy and protecting local voters could impede a steady climb on the global economy.

"We need to remind the Americans that we've got a multi-billion-dollar municipal and procurement procurement market in this country. Americans have unfettered access to it right now, but if they shut down their markets, there will be consequences," Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff.



"The idea is that, in the current crisis, we are going to take taxpayer dollars and buy Chinese or other foreign materials for infrastructure construction is absurd. Let's stop being apologetic for foreign procurement and put American back to work." —Thomas Gibson, president, American Iron and Steel Institute



"The danger in this environment is that you start to get tit-for-tat retaliation and it serves nobody's interests."

—World Bank president Robert Zoellick

"Given the importance of organized labour to the current U.S. administration, I think we should be encouraging a little more co-operative by [means] on both sides of the border," —Zerlina Maxey, former Canadian ambassador to Washington.

"Deficit stimulus measures may have pulled us back from the abyss, but we have to remain vigilant that a protectionist backlash does not push us back to the edge." —Gertjan Oei, European Union trade commissioner

THE ECONOGAUGE

Our weekly estimate of the prevailing mood among investors and consumers



THE WEEK AHEAD

FRIDAY, JUNE 19: Statistics Canada will release retail trade figures for the month of April. Some analysts are expecting a slight gain.

TUESDAY, JUNE 23: The U.S. will report the number of new home sales last month. Even though the price of homes are down

more than 20 per cent, many experts expect only a modest increase in sales.

Comet Ison instead as early morning from the PPI telescope, taken last year



The telescope dome in Hess, Nevada

LOOK OUT BELOW!

A new telescope system will keep watch for killer asteroids from space

BY KAREN LIKHAI • In 1908, the skies over Siberia lit up in a sudden and massive explosion, or asteroid, 40 km wide, had entered earth's atmosphere and was breaking up in a multi-explosion burst. Although the asteroid itself didn't make it to the ground, the shock wave and massive fireball that resulted destroyed 2,000,000 tonnes of timber, laying waste to the ground below. The Bergnaya event, as it's called, took place in a remote area, so no human lives were lost. If the blast happened over Toronto, London or Shanghai, it would be another story.

Thousands of asteroids, most of them untracked, zoom around our planet; some are over 10 km wide. "Right now, the most probable amount of warning we'll have for an asteroid impact is zero, because we don't know where most of them are," says Robert Jedicke, 46, a University of Hawaii astronomer originally from Niagara Falls, Ont. Jedicke is part of a team at UH's Institute for Astronomy that's working to change that. A new program, Pan-STARRS, will combine the world's most powerful digital imaging telescope with the largest digital camera

in the world, killing off 70 percent of all species, including the dinosaurs.

In 1998, the team of amateur astronomers at Gatorback Observatory saw they'd found about 83 per cent of them, and that same interest led to the next century, when it comes to these asteroids—identifying potential city killers, like the one in Tunguska—it's another story.

Asteroids, which are leftovers from the creation of our solar system, pepper our planet more often than most realize. "Smallish-sized objects come in every day, and Vesta-sized objects come in once or twice a year," says Dan Tournier, who manages the Near-Earth Object Program Office at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Those under 20 m in diameter cause little damage. (Sand-size particles burning up in the atmosphere can become footprints ground at "shooting stars.")

Events like Tunguska happen every two or three dozen years. Asteroids one kilometer across or wider strike our planet only about once or twice every million years, but their impact is devastating on a global scale. Six million years ago, a 15-km asteroid caused

an 18-million-square-kilometre crater in a single 3.6-km telescope, at half the price.

Within each telescope will be a 1.8-mirror and the biggest digital-camera ever made, with 1.4 billion pixels on an array of 40 sq cm. [Your average digital camera has about five million pixels on a chip just a few millimetres across.] "The sheer amount of information we'll be able to generate is amazing," says Jedicke, who notes that each telescope will gather about one gigabyte of image data per minute—enough to fill up a typical laptop in under an hour.

Avoid detection isn't the program's only goal. Within the next 15 years, Pan-STARRS should be able to catalogue up to 1 billion stars that have never been seen before within our galaxy, the Milky Way, and a billion new galaxies, too, says project manager William Jurgens. It will be searching for comets, known dwarf/celestial bodies that are smaller than stars, and unknown planets. Jurgens expects to find up to 70 new planets within the next five years. Pan-STARRS will also search for supernovae in distant galaxies. Because these exploding stars have a constant brightness, and thus decrease when they're at a greater distance, supernovae help scientists track the universe's expansion. The project, he says, will provide "huge amounts of information about how our sun works."

And what if Pan-STARRS finds an asteroid on a collision course with earth? As long as we have enough warning, it shouldn't be a problem, Jedicke says. In 2007, for example, NASA successfully exploded a spacecraft called Deep Impact with a missile. "If we can do that, we can slam a bomb into it, and blow it up," Jedicke says, although he admits that shooting nuclear weapons into space isn't the most popular choice.

Southern could also position a large spacecraft near an earth-threatening asteroid, creating a slight gravitational tug that would pull it off-course. They may have a chance to test this method soon: a 270-m asteroid, called Apophis, is set to make an approach to earth 20 years from now. Computer models show that, if it passes through a specific 600-m gap, Apophis could swing back to strike the earth in 2036. "If we can move it out of that loophole, just a little bit, it'll miss us," Yeaman says, noting that a gravity truss might be a good way to do it.

How many other Apophis-size rocks are on a potential collision course with earth? Nobody knows for sure. "One of my colleagues observed that there are more people working in a single McDonald's than there are trying to save civilization from an asteroid," Jedicke says. Pan-STARRS will help to find those survivors, one would hope, before they find us. ■

LONGER-LIVING WORMS MAY MEAN IMMORTALITY

Hermann researchers have helped the lifespan of worms, C. elegans, with mutated ones that could greatly increase how long humans live. The scientists genetically engineered the worms' neurons, which are involved in growth and behavior but have a finite lifespan, to act more like reproductive ones, which are considered immortal, thus making the somatic cells continually resilient. Right now, the technique can work on an *as-is*-we're too complex.

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MACLEAN'S
MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL.

ROGERS

Did you hear the one about Obama?

No? That's because
comedics are giving the
new Prez an easy ride.

BY JOHN REHDER • Stand-up comic Obama's victory last November, late-night TV host Jimmy Kimmel stopped by Legatini's, a barbershop in L.A. He sat there for a trim but also to test out, "in behalf of the comedy community," what type of jokes about the new President the almost all-black staff and clients considered off-limits. Cracks about Obama being a black dancer are fine, they said. So are jabs at his big ears. But, Kimmel was told, Mrs. O's "butts" are off-limits.

The rule was a joke (a pretty good one, actually), but it illustrated a real concern among some comedians and late-night hosts heading into the Obama era. Sure, critics would be able to cover the Vice President Joe Biden to regularly, and his foot in his mouth, but Obama, unlike most of the comedians-in-chief who preceded him, wasn't a walking purchase. Most of the late-night hosts here grudgingly complained about how little the President goes there to work. Comedian Chris Rock counseled Obama to the comical title friend fire: "Ooh, you're young and virile and you've got a beautiful wife and kids," Rock told CNN. "You know, what do you say?"

For starters, how about shorter jokes? A poll made by Renaissance Isaac, of all people, a day after Obama entered the White House keeps Obama, the dad, would "more tickled of intelligence" in comedy. No longer can late-night writers count on a president to write the show for them: The days of dressing and putting Obama or one-liners about somber blue dresses into monologues were over. That, at least, was one of the premises that came with dressing the junior senator from Illinois. So how then, halfway through Obama's second 100 days, are the late-night guys coping?

Comics, for argument's sake, the first week of June. After all, with Conan O'Brien moving into Jay Leno's chair on The Tonight Show, it marked the greatest change to late night in a generation. The other larks had every reason to top of their games. And there was no shortage of stars: the U.S. government had just taken over General Motors and Obama was back from New York, where he'd whizzed the first leg away for a dance and a Broadway play with the public dinner which was set afraid to take a swing at a black



OBAMA and Jay Leno, off-air at The Tonight Show

Yeshiva University. "When comedians don't have the fire or intellectual energy, they can always play the Biden role." Doubtless, Biden jokes are a no-brainer.

Douglas doubts the President's popularity, so he has faced a bit of resistance from his audience. After one joke that didn't go over well, Stewart explained that it is okay to laugh at Obama. Unlike, of course, the politicians in poor taste, CFC received more than 1,300 complaints following its New Year's Eve special. Broadcast Standards Canada, which included a edit in which one of the hosts asked how a presidential assassination was made easier by the fact there's a black man in the White House. The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council ruled it a "stereotyping, wounded racial remark."

Obama earned compassion of his own with a comedic slip, which he appeared on The Tonight Show in March and squared his hosting skills to those of special Olympians. During most late-night appearances, however, he learned to keep total control, often taking some of the best lines. On O'Brien's second night hosting, The Tonight Show, he showed a clip from an interview Obama had done with NBC news anchor Brian Williams. During the sit-down, the President admitted that the interview from Jerry Seinfeld had been a hot topic at the White House. "I just went [Conan] to know," said Obama, "that there is no going to be any bad air coming out from Washington if he scores it up." A week later, Obama was at it again, appearing via satellite on The Collector

IT'S ALMOST AS IF OBAMA THOUGHT HE'D TOSS THE COMEDIANS A BONE BY PICKING BIDEN'

guy "you don't want to appear racist," Buddy Westen, a former writer for The Tonight Show, told the L.A. Times. "You can't do the stereotypical thing." Then there's the claim it's all a big liberal conspiracy, a theory bolstered by the fact that most in the comedy business are Democrats. But off that, says expert of political humour, is a joke. What it really comes down to is the lack of an angle, an easy kick. Obama doesn't throw around words with the English language or syntax, which makes him tougher to write. "It's a telling deficit most of [the mainstream network shows'] approach, which has to do with superficial things, personality stuff," says Preston, author of *Strange Bedfellow: How Late-Night Comedy Turns Democratic* (to be released July 1). "Obamas

are more serious writers than [the comedians] themselves, they're more cerebral," he says. "They're more cerebral than the rest of us."

Meanwhile, his VP has become a favorite target. "It's almost as if Obama thought he'd need to demonstrate a bone by picking Biden," says Robert Thompson, director of the Blaster Center for Television and Popular Culture at

JAPAN: THE CRYING SUMO FESTIVAL

Two sumo wrestlers fight them gently, end make sure ladies will still the babies start weeping—the local help baby. This happens once every year in Tokyo's 1,000-year-old Nekoma-no-fest. Despite the apparent trauma, the contest is meant to bring good health. It's based on a proverb that says healthy children should cry a lot. Whether out of tenderness or sadness, almost 100 babies are held high each year.



(estimates ranged between US\$124,000 and US\$126,000). And yet, about the best Lennons, Kimmel and O'Brien could muster, was a series of red-penis jokes about Phil Specter's hair and Dick Cheney's power. Much more likely, they'll be still harping on the fact the former VP has his hairy bunsy on the face), was a crack about a jumpy senior citizen again snatching a paper thimble from the ground during the Obamas' dinner, and how planting a garden in Donald Trump's hair was one of the highlights of the trip for Michelle. It was the kind of material that sells at old-age homes.

In fairness, there has been some pointed banter aimed at Obama. "They've done a lot of jokes about the haircut, some jokes about how he's so cool, he's this cool chick figure," says Russell Peters, a former stand-up comic who now teaches American studies at the University of Lethbridge. But too often, it seems, the President is being used as a sharpie set piece, well worn like about dumb George W. and Bill Clinton, the hair big. Some argue there's a reluctance to poke fun at the loss during these tough economic times. Others have suggested that the group of middle-aged white boys are afraid to take a swing at a black

GOLD DOESN'T COME CHEAP

Athletes and B2ten make a business case for Olympic glory

BY KAREN MACQUEEN • It was the spring of 2007, early days for the elite, little-known band of amateur athletes known as Team Barry Hock, a Calgary mountain biker, somewhere up north. He had, accompanied, assembled by a group of crime-minded Calgary business leaders to host a pic-a-the. This star of the breakfast meeting was Jennifer Heil of Sportex Gravel, Alta., a gold medallist in mogul slalom at the Tarn Olympics and, not surprisingly, a commerce student at McGill University. Also there was her coach and boy friend, Dennis Gauthier, and J.D. Miller, a Montreal-based consultant in banking, insurance and acquisitions, and a friend and trustee both. The three are the bones, and soul, and bones of B2ten, an organization they founded to shake up amateur sport funding by connecting Canadian business leaders with Olympic-level athletes—not as sponsors but as donors and mentors. The “B” stands for a business approach to investing in performance. That day they gathered on behalf of Helen Upperton, a Calgary biker phenom with huge promise. Hock recalls Upperton was nervous, and then she began to speak.

“I need a biker,” he recalls. “I need a mechanic. I need mentors,” says Upperton, recalling her shopping for two years later. As a private equity guy, Hock pitched business plans everyday. “The first question I ask myself is ‘Is your plan?’ my tick,” are these the right people? Check the box. Are they passionate? Check the box. What’s the value proposition? Well, it’s easy to see the value proposition here. [Upperton, riding with an uncoordinated dad, finished fourth at the Tarn Games, 0.08 of a second off the podium.] Is there a chance of success? Can I make a difference? Check, check. The meeting lasted 45 minutes. “That’s the pitch,” says Miller. “You give a lot except, but nothing.”



HELLO Upperton couldn't have bought the \$10,000 sled

ing she is in now. You don't get any rights for that, though. It's the right thing.” Et, check-and check.

The group gave a four-year commitment, and within weeks a top notchified crew. Money was en route to Calgary. Total cost to purchase and modifications: \$180,000 plus lots of cash savings across the country. B2ten has raised \$1 million, all of it spent to fund a pool of “ambition”—athletes of great ability but specific career needs. “Canada is notorious for fair and equal treatment for all people,” says Upperton. “It recognizes that's a tremendous quality to have. In sports, do you want a whole bunch of brands of people who can think four or eight? Or do you want a couple of people who can stand on the podium?”

The idea was viewed skeptically by the sports establishment, but B2ten rose to grab Olympic glory by creating off Canada's beat and building a private sector one. Most, though not all, athletes are now adults, says Gauthier. It's about complementing existing programs, he says. “Let's produce 30 medals and let's all take credit for it.”

An adrenalin-fueled team coach in 2002, he watched Heil miss an Olympic bronze in Salt Lake City by 0.03 of a point. The race

four years ago spent building an independent training program for Heil. The seed money was underwritten by a group of Edmonton business leaders, led by lawyer Doug Goss, a Heil family friend, and including Karen Lowe, GM of the Oilers. J.D. Miller came on board gathering donors in Montreal, where Heil was training and attending university. Heil recalls feeling “sooper excited” in June. “That's amazingly powerful to be that confident,” she says. And, for Canadians, all too rare.

For Goss, the Gauthier and Miller founded Team Heil should represent nothing. And as it has grown, slowly, to 21 members athletes, mostly within an elite, representing a wide range of Canada's top medal hopefuls.

Just last week, a Toronto group, including Blue Jays executive CEO Paul Beaton, raised \$80,000 for figure skating phenom Patrick Chan, to ease the cost of training with his Florida-based coach Brian Johnson. Another \$100,000 plus cash savings across the country. B2ten has raised \$1 million, all of it spent to fund a pool of “ambition”—athletes of great ability but specific career needs. “Canada is notorious for fair and equal treatment for all people,” says Upperton. “It recognizes that's a tremendous quality to have. In sports, do you want a whole bunch of brands of people who can think four or eight? Or do you want a couple of people who can stand on the podium?”

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A ROCK engraving of the Buddha in northern Pakistan's mountainous areas.

age. “Militants are definitely a threat to Swat's historical sites,” says analytical at the Subashan Abdul Qayyum Museum in Peshawar, requesting anonymity. “They tried to attack monasteries and even a mosque [the Shah Mosque, just outside Mingora, the area's main town]. But the government had good security there so the attackers were repelled.” Several monasteries, others have moved the most precious of Swat's Buddhist relics in an unflooded location.

The sites, however, remain exposed. Pakistani officials don't know how badly, if at all, ruins similar to Takht-i-Bahi have been damaged during the Swat offensive—the region is still too dangerous for any assessment. Any loss would be a grave blow, not only to the world's Buddhist heritage, but, according to some Pakistanis, to the identity of Pakistan itself. “This is something from the past, and the Quran tells us the past is important to Muslims,” says Ishaq Bag, a guide at the Dharmapuri complex in Taxila, 30 km north of the capital Islamabad, where some of the Buddha's ashes were placed by Emperor Ashoka. “There are many prophets who come before the Prophet Muhammad. Some people have believed Buddha was one of those. He speaks of equality between man, so does Islam. He speaks about love, so does Islam.”

For Muslims like Bag, paying tribute to Buddha is in no way contradiction their Islamic faith. But even he admits the world can speak only to other Muslims about his beliefs. “You never hear people say he is blessing.” His caution is understandable. Even though the Taliban are on the run in Swat, it's not inconceivable that one day Dera Ismail Khan and Takht-i-Bahi's mountain slopes could be occupied by gas-toting Islamic radicals. Against such brutal cruelty, Buddhism is unlikely to stand a chance. ■

RADICALS VS. BUDDHA

Pakistan's Buddhist heritage is under attack by the Taliban

what were once monks' residences. None of them can tell you much about the prolific history of Buddhism in Pakistan and the role Buddhists played in bringing peace to a region perennially beset by violence. They can tell you little about Takht-i-Bahi, the third-century BCE emperor of the Mauryan dynasty of India, who, after witnessing first-hand the lifting fields of his army's expansive campaigns, converted to Buddhism, launched war, and spent the rest of his life actively promoting a Buddhist inspired program of peace and brotherhood. His story ends like a fable lesson in fiction. The general who enjoyed his life after his conversion is legendary. Some of the legacy remains in Takht-i-Bahi, in the quiet, contemplative grounds of people like Ali who came there to clear their minds.

For a time, when the Taliban were in control of Malakand a few years ago, go, that serenity appeared to be at an end there. Their brand of Buddhism as an established fact. The March 2001 destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, officially endorsed by the then ruling Taliban regime of Mullah Mohammad Omar, and the more recent November 2007 destruction of a seven-story tall Buddha statue in the Jahanabad region of Swat, are examples of what could have been in store for Pakistan's Buddhist heritage.

LIP SERVICE FOR ALL THAT AILS YOU

Thousands of people flock a small Vietnamese village every day to see Trin Huong can spit on them. Huong claims that the water will kill his mouth with red and turn辦n his magic lips give the power to cure all diseases and ailments. He's been called a charlatan, but high health care costs make so-called “healers” popular. Some people even quit their medications in favour of Huong's spit shower.

ONE FOR THE BOOKS

CUSTARD-COVERED KIDS CRUSH RECORD

1,250 pies were checked in a mess of over 250 piping kids in the world's largest ever custard pie fight. The event lasted just under two minutes—righting kids, organisms and onlookers in sticky gooey-pie sauce. It was part of a children's festival in Horsham, England, an event an organizer says is about “fun, silly and amazing young.” There was not only a pie fight that saw over 300 students lining up at the University of Birmingham,

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW COWIE/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

IT'S A MIRACLE!

THE BACK PAGES

film

Pecan loved this guy
PAUL

media

Look what
Archie's done
PAUL

art

Cancelled
in Ottawa
PAUL

taste

An revisit
French food
PAUL

help

Support group
for dummies
PAUL

steyn

Name a date.
I'll be there.
PAUL



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DRAKE SUPERIOR

The former 'Degrassi' actor is being hailed as the next hip-hop superstar. Is he also Rihanna's new man? BY SHANDA DEZIEL

music

Drake may be the first rapper to talk about how his mom disapproves of his car. The former *Degrassi: The Next Generation* star used his amazing money to lease a Rolls-Royce Phantom in order to fit into the world of hip hop—and he's not too proud to admit it in his song, *See What I Do*, that kind of thing doesn't go over well at home. "And my mother's embarrassed to put my phantom out / So I walk where few houses down / She said if I shouldn't have until I have the crown / But I don't wanna feel the need to wear diamonds around / So she wonder where my hand is / Accessorize in the evening / But yet I'm walking round the f--- like my wife your eighteen."

For Drake, who is being hailed as the next hip-hop superstar, it would be difficult to reconcile a lifelong car-flaunting mother—such as Forest Hill, a stoic, professionally Jewish neighbourhood in Toronto. Teen actress Drake Graham (he goes by Aubrey Graham when singing, and Drake when singing), his parents split when he was young. His father is an African American man who lived in Memphis, and his mom, who is white, raised him in Toronto, where he was born and raised. "I didn't go to Hebrew school though," he told Peter Rosenberg, a popular Jewish hip-hop talk show host. "I collected. I collected the money."

At 13, he landed on the Canadian teen melodrama *Degrassi: The Next Generation* (TNG) playing Jimmy Brooks, a wealthy kid who ends up in a wheelchair after a bullet shatters his spine. Not exactly

the kind of bullet wound he can brag about to his hip-hop peers. His Uncle Lil Wayne, who has a few weapon scars and claims to have shot himself accidentally with a .44 calibre when he was 12,

Drake acknowledges his less-than-thug upbringing, joking to *Rolling Stone* magazine that he had to overcome the three strikes against him: "Being an actor, light-skinned and Canadian." So far, it's all been early success: Record companies Universal and Adantic are rumoured to be eyeing him to replace Jay-Z, whose millions up front figure being thrown around. His coming-soon show at O2 in London, Canada, will sell out the big names in the concert circuit, including Kanye West, Lil Wayne, Busta Rhymes and Taio Cruz—and was positively reviewed by the *New York Times*, the *Village Voice* and *Rolling Stone*, who named him the "hot test MC in the game" and "a '09 year-old prodigy."

While Drake has never produced an *A-list* international hip-hopstar—sorry, Macmillan Fresh West—norther Drake's Canadianness over the years as a teen soap have destined legends like Dr Dre and Jay Z from collaborating with him. And females, beautiful women are more so bothered by the but of his handsome face. Just check the sidebar for gossip about how Drake is the new man in the dramatic lives of young R&B star Rihanna. Despite P.D. sightings at bowling alleys

and celebrity record release parties, the official word is they're just friends, and he's sent messages encouraging her to *Get in touch* instead of *Get off me* when he's on one song. "That's as big as I could probably get a break down."

Up until now though, he's recorded and self-released four "mixtapes" over the Internet—but bankrolled by all that Degrassi money. The last one, *So Far Gone*, came out in February and the Toronto release party was hosted by NBA superstar LeBron James. The album itself, according to Rolling Stone, was "critically lauded for its mix of melody and dirt bangers." But some decided the work as a knock-off of Jay-Z's *Year 3000* & *Brooklyn* due to Drake's creating and female surround numbers. "The next album is already titled *Thank Me Later*, and the hottest collaborations have been lined up—Drake just needs to decide on a label."



DRAKE WAS wheelchair-bound Jimmy Brooks in *Degrassi: The Next Generation*

WHILE HIS FOREST HILL neighbourhood isn't synonymous with black music, Drake does have some pretty heavy-hitting influences in his life. He spent summers in Memphis with his father, Dennis Graham, who was a drummer for Jerry Lee Lewis and friends with Muhammad Ali. His grandmother, he says, babysat Lewis' son, Marlon. One of his uncles, Larry Graham, was the bassist in Sly and the Family Stone and played with Prince. Another underground icon, Marion "Queen" Hodges, who wrote Drake

Me or the River and Love and Happiness with Al Green.

And then there's Drake's story of how he started rapping, which, as told to the Complex blog, almost sounds too "fright" to be true. "My dad would call for two years and he'd share a call with this dude who didn't really have anyone to speak to. So, he used to share his phone time with this dude and at the end I was probably 16 or 17, this dude was like 20 or 21, and he would always rap to me over the phone—it was Povency, that was his rap name. I wanted to get into it and I started rapping my own name. And he would call me and we would just rap to each other. And after my dad passed, I kept him with the dude and eventually I accepted the fact that I wanted to be in music."

It was around that same time that Drake started handling his CD at his day job, on the *Degrassi* set. The cast and crew immediately recognized his talent and encouraged him to give a demo to the show's co-creator Linda Schuyler, thinking that was something he could showcase on the series. According to Schuyler, Drake (before he became so hot) was amateur. "He said, 'I do some rapping on it and I don't know if I want Lands to hear it.' Which is so cute." The other problem with bringing him more to the show, says Sacha Baron, who plays Drake's bestie in the original *Degrassi* and in *The Next Generation*, was that Drake didn't think his character Janney would rap. "We said whatever you say it doesn't have to be Drake-level hip hop," says Baron, who is also one of the series' directors. "In fact, it needs to be less. He did it in the end. And I think he was happy."

Schuyler, Baron's and Drizzy's seven-year run as teenagers by this rule: "The writers," says Schuyler, "say his lyrics are doggerel, clear, honest and he's going through a lot of genuine self-examination." Adds Baron: "I find his lyrics really tell a story about who he is, the darker side, though. He's half-black, half-Jewish, with a white mom—so many different backgrounds that he might never feel accepted in certain circles. It would feel like if he was talking about gangbanging, but he raps about his experience."

Actually, he rarely raps about his ladies. R&B queen Mary J. Blige has rained fire on the "controversy" on the basis of his song "I'm the Man." "The 'hot' Drake is the best," she

told a camera crew at Summer Jam '09. "I love what they're singing about, they're bigging up women again. They're remaking women first/sexual. It's come to the point where women were considered nothing, so now we're around and said, 'You the best.' 'Inferiority, Drake works the sentiments.' The night," he told a female radio host in April, "Denny—one and very much single. Very good man. I like to cook. I like to throw on overalls and cook—give me a massage. But I like women though, women who have a presence and self-awareness, and who are educated, sensitive and fancy." If the rumors are true, Rihanna may have found herself a keeper this time around.

about her as a sack star." But even a Canadian child TV star handle all that's expected of him and all that goes along with the stardom he seems destined for? The partisans are on the prowl for the hotly anticipated photo-album and *RoboCop*. He's theorizing so much. Complex's label that released an unauthorized album of his, he's got a publicist back in New York to manage his career, and he's the target of an Internet hooligan—that most ardent fan doesn't experience until they're at least 18. Not a album—which led to an all-day press conference—"The hot towed him a guillotine, asking what he's achieving before he's even in there laughing because he's got a tan with Robert De Niro. Or that he's a thin-skinned, half-Jewish Canadian and a son from the South Bronx or the Deep South? Perhaps the last issue comes from his close links with another "demon" (real or not) in one-to-one self-selecting rapper, Lil Wayne?

This certainly wasn't something that the original *Degrassi* kids ever had to worry about. No one from 21st Century was going to be coerced for a recording contract.

The latest star of the show, who came on last year after Drake's character Janney had graduated, may be psyched. Instead of falling into the distance, maybe doing a guest spot on *Degrassi* every once in a while (as many of the graduates tend to do), Drizzy Changé changed his name and career path and is making surprise appearances on *The Tonight Show*—he showed up last week with James Franco. "It's like he's a superstar," says Baron. "The new kids are realizing, 'Oh my God, he was on the show and he's about to pop!' I'm sure a lot of them are inspired to start their own rap crews now."

By the time they get themselves established, expect Drake to be conquering something else. He's been refining the Will Smith comparison: "I'm going to have the moves and s---," he promises. More power. Should probably start clearing out the driveway. ■



IT'S NOT EXACTLY THE KIND OF BULLET HE CAN BRAG ABOUT TO HIS HIP-HOP PEERS

"My God, you look at those two faces together," Schuyler gushes about Drake and Rihanna, "and you think, that's pretty snazzy." She's proud like mom, and rightfully so—their one who sponsored us at 17. "We was looking for an urban, friend-of-everybody type," she says. "Abey, I had a chance about him, and a search, and some beautif' ful people he has now. He was great as anything, but willing to do whatever it takes." When the stars took to the stage last night, the cast members cheering of roundabout south of the border: "We would get 3,000 or 4,000 kids and Adrienne even then had that ass

on stage," says Drizzy. "It's like, 'What's up?' and then the whole place goes wild." The stars' tour has been a success, and the cast members are still cheering. "I'm going to have the moves and s---," he promises. More power. Should probably start clearing out the driveway. ■



SOULJA BOY TELL 'EM...HAS SOMETHING TO SAY
"You voice is as lovely / I love you / I miss you / I miss you / I really miss you ya / But I can't / 6/7 8 triple 0 8 2 12 / Baby do you know that I miss u / I wanna get u / I thought that I can't / now baby girl / And that's the issue / Gah I wanna / I miss u / I just wanna like u / But I can't / right now a day / I'll take through the pain / I'll take you through the phone—/ I'll take you through The Phone / I'll take you through Soulja Boy's album, *SouljaBoyTell'em*

THE REAL COLLECTION



JOHN CAZALE plays Fredo in *The Godfather Part II* (1974). "I learned more about acting from John than anyone else," says Al Pacino

Godfather loser, Hollywood legend

A new documentary hauls John Cazale as one of the most influential actors of his generation

BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON • John Cazale is one of the greatest actors you've never heard of. Most people know a blurb at the opening of his墓, and that they have played Fredo in *The Godfather*, and in there is a flush of recognition—oh, charge! Fredo, the end-of-laser of the Corleone clan, left an indelible mark on Hollywood's unknown soldiers. He never won a film award or was nominated for an Oscar. When he died in 1978, at 42, he had appeared in just five features. But those movies—*The Godfather Part I* and *II*, *The Godfather*, *The Godfather* and *Gang Day*/Jarmusch's *Marienbad*—are the survivors of *70* American classics, with a collective tally of 40 Academy Award nominations. And Cazale is their sole consensus descendent.

More than those decades after his death, this missing role is now being heralded as one

of the most brilliant and influential actors of his generation. Those doing the lauding include Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, Gene Hackman and Meryl Streep, whose working with Cazale's spirit inspired her to younger actors who never knew him but continue to ascribe influence, notably Philip Seymour Hoffman, Steve Buscemi and Ben Stiller. The Cazale memoirs are part of a remarkable new HBO documentary called *I Know It Was You*, which is showing this week as part of the Worldwide Short Film Festival in Toronto.

The title alludes to a line from *The Godfather Part II*, in which Pacino's character, Michael Corleone, confronts his older brother about betraying the family: "I know it was you, Fredo. You broke my heart." But it also echoes the common response of an actor trying to place a character: who is both deeply familiar yet oddly anonymous.

"Cazale had that known/unknown quality," says the documentary's 44-year-old director, Richard Shepard, who has narrated a life-long obsession with the actor. Shepard was just 18 when his father took him to a revival screening of *The Godfather* and it, and it was Cazale who made the deepest impression. "I really responded to him without understanding why," he says, on the phone from Los Angeles. "Maybe it was the sadness in his eyes." Sadness and grief and reverence and fear. As Fredo, Cazale created the heart-breaking portrait of a weak, wounded man who stayed employable even though he was useless. Then, working with Pacino again as the main bank robber in *Gang Day Afternoon*, he became a different person—a pale freshie with long hair, a wrinkled front and the hard-worn estimate of a human being.

Pacino, who had known Cazale as a teen when they worked as managers for Standard Oil, considered him his "living past." They co-starred in three old Broadway plays by Joseph Hayes, including *The Indian Wants the Bronx*, for which both won Obies awards. In *I Know It Was You*, Pacino says how deeply Cazale would deliver as a character: "I learned more about acting from John than anyone else," he says, explaining how Cazale would slip into a scene without notice. "You would just see this delicate smile

WE'RE STALKING... JESSICA ALBA
Jessica Alba has finally apologized to Oklahoma City for vanquishing it with posters of great white sharks. Alba was partially paid in a campaign to raise awareness of the species' declining numbers. "I realize that I should have used better judgment and I regret not thinking things through before I raise a sponsorship and I'd advised [Oklahoma City] to let me know if I get involved with the people behind this campaign," says Alba.

you found your way, and that the unpredictable would stay. It was inspiring."

Some of the documentary's most detailed analysis comes from younger actors like Buscemi, who picks out a key detail from the wedding scene in *The Deer Hunter*, where Cazale glances down to see if his fly is open. Buscemi privately admires his Cazale "type," and when he played a bookie on *The Sopranos*, his accomplice was modeled on Cazale's character in *Gang Day Afternoon*.

Cazale's era character actors were n't celebrities, but he had a surprising reputation as a chink magnet, although "he looked like St. Francis of Assisi," says Pacino. "In his short life, John had some of the most beautiful women as girlfriends on the face of the planet." One was Streep, who fell in love with Cazale's character in *Measure for Measure* in Central Park. "She was mad for him and he was mad for her," Pacino recalls.

Streep and Cazale were living together when he was diagnosed with lung cancer. That made his casting in *The Deer Hunter* a highlight moment. And when the cast wouldn't leave him, Streep helped De Niro negotiate to finance a bond. Cazale died before the film was released, with Streep by his side. "The most amazing thing was see Meryl in all of that," says Pacino. "When I met that girl there with him like that, I thought, 'That's it! That's it! As great as she is in all her work, that's what I think of when I think of her. That moment!'" ■



PEOPLE ARE so sorry for Betty, sighs the Archie writer, that they've started writing to her in person with letters of encouragement.

They're furious he chose Veronica

Even people who didn't realize they were still fans care about Archie's marriage proposal

BY JAMES J. WEISMAN • Archie doesn't even generate stories that just about any comic today. The biggest growth of his 43 years this August, in the 50th issue of the main Archie title, will be the world's oldest teenager proposal to his heavily sweetened "We Care" [part of a show he art that takes place after they graduate from college]. When the story was announced, it created what its writer, Michael Uslan, calls "a firestorm of media attention." It's the latest in a series of Archiefesto events the publisher has already done: "New Look" issues with the characters rechristened in an unconvincingly realistic style, and another comic, Archie: Six Feet Way, was killed as the first ever look at the characters when they started at Riverdale High. For a comic that's been telling the same stories for 43 years, Archie sure is making a lot of changes—especially if everything will probably go back to the status quo eventually.

Why does Archie feel the need to shake things up? Partly because an unusual story can get heavy promotion on the press. Uslan, a Warner Bros. producer who conceived and wrote the marriage arc (born by long-time Archie artist Stan Goldberg), told *Maclean's* that he was annoyed by all the publicity that he would ordinarily not have much to say about comic: "My Lene [Lennart] showed me his last *Thought-Bubble*," he says. "Suzie Coven used it as her sign-off. Major magazines and newspapers are running editorials on it. 'Weridat thing of all, we've gotten coverage on it! It's nuts!' This would never happen for a six-page story that sticks to the formula—that's why Victor Goralick, Archie's long-time editor, says that these longer, change-of-place stories are necessary to remind people we are not *the same*."

STOP THE PRESSES... THE LATE, GREAT ECONOMIST
A column originally included in *Harrison Daily* in a life of great dead economists. He is, in fact, alive and well and a professor at the University of Maryland. "The *Guardian* on June 3, sympathizing for a editor reader by columnist editor Larry Elliott. On June 7, Elliott wrote a column in which he tried to put together a "fantasy economy" drawn out of dead financial experts, and included only in his dream fears."



CAMOUFLAGE: From Ballfield to Cetwak, a partnership with the Imperial War Museum in London, continues until Aug. 1, 2010.

What to 'see' in Ottawa this year

A show at the Canadian War Museum points out artists' long association with camouflage

BY JOHN GEDDES • There was a moment in 1912 when hatchet-faced British didn't want to be the coolest thing a punk rocker could wear. Punk was fading that year, at least the brand that surfaced in the late seventies, and gothy eighties rock was rising. But in a last full-throated yell, the Clash put out what would be their final record, *Combat Rock*, and Joe Strummer, the London band's preternaturally lead singer, started showing off for success in camouflage. Strummer died in 2002, but his '82 come-prime, incredibly, have survived. When I came upon them in the new *Camouflage* show at the Canadian War Museum, a very new wave of artists realized that they needed to break up the prattle of axes and capeman against battlefields and backdrops. This was logically work for artists. Among the most remarkable objects in the show are the First World War notebooks (looking fragile under glass) of the French painter André Mare, whose drawings of camouflaged field guns are uncannily vulgar.

By the end of the war, all major combatant nations had established their own camouflage units. But this remained a sort of hothouse—battlefield war hand-painted and grotesquely undeniably disguised—until the technology to mass-produce fabric with irregular printed designs emerged in the late 1920s. In the Second World War, camouflage became commonplace. The exhibition shows off a wide array of so-called "disruptive pattern uniforms" that followed, ranging from the gaudy greens and blues known as "white Canadian uniforms" meant to disappear against snow.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the show is the section devoted to so-called "drab" painting on Second World War ships. The drab, which look like monochromatic art, were meant to make whole vessels vanish against sea and sky. Among the well-known spreading of Canadian solutions to the British ship was a stencil painting of a bearded

lumberjack in the snow, cause later on snowflakes, or at least ones once was. One use had, it's extremely fun to look at. On the other, it's most easily lost to warfare. That made camouflage an obvious anti-war hidden statement in the Vietnam era. Soon enough, Andy Warhol was influenced by this colorless, coldly colored icon, two of his prints grace the exhibition. Camouflage documents and battle outcome, also in the show, cause later

I wonder if the curators named something by angling the way M.F. S-H—both the 1970 movie and the 1973-1981 TV series—made loosely dressed-up military seen like a chivalry, mildly rebellious look. The main stream M.F.S-H aesthetic might be the reason why Strummer's camouflage looked like a statement a year. But in the rest of this show, that wasn't only apt. Camouflage has always been as much about art as it is about strategy.

NOW SHOWING... THE ULTIMATE DOLLHOUSE
British miniaturist Peter Ritzke, 62, is selling a hyperrealistic dollhouse to a Canadian firm—and \$91,000, it costs more than some real houses on the U.K. market. The 23-room dollhouse, which has servants' quarters, a games room, and a library with over 1,000 individually bound books, took him over 15 years to create. The windowsills are hand-made from plastic. "The level building," says Ritzke, who'll use the money to tour Niagara Falls

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM



CAST FISH After 250 years of culinary supremacy, traditional haute cuisine has fallen as the French embark on a love affair with nouvelle.

The sad demise of French cooking

Never mind lower cafés and top chefs, even some classic cheeses are becoming extinct

BY BRUNA RETRAN • Just as it has for so many North Americans, Michael Stroberger's love affair with French cooking began with a childhood trip to France. And equally common, there is a parallel that did the trick. The English-speaking countries, after all, can grill a hunk of meat as well as anybody, but in the not-so-distant past, any foodstuff that wasn't previously moldy was in danger of being boiled to mush. But for the American journalist, 13 years old on that 1980 mid-July trip "down the beaten path," there were a life-changing moment, when he realized that food could be a luxury experience, not just a fuel stop in the day's narrative. It's that moment, now mostly muted, that adds a certain Proustian allure to *An Interview With All That Food: Wine and the Death of France* (Doubleday), Stroberger's lament to the passing of 250 years of culinary supremacy.

It's a sweeping claim, of course, a noting duckette for the plaudits by diners and no one less of all. Stroberger, denies the nobility of French cooking is the world's greatest of all. And, as part of his assertion about the nation without France will be strengthened, it would raise the dour, not the country itself, but of certain foreign francophiles' idea of France. But that would still be a loss to a nation whose culinary reputation has always been a doubleplus plus, and Stroberger's urge for the ruling gods to give us back our

When New York's French Culinary Institute—a key driver of Gallic cultural influence in the U.S.—shut its doors in 2006, it couldn't find a single Frenchman to attend among the 20 top French chefs invited. And it was Jean-Antoine Betz-Serante,

one of the gods of French haute cuisine, who said, "Tell me what you eat, and I shall tell you what you are." And for North Americans, because like us, French obesity rates are increasing, on track, according to Steinberg's data, to reach U.S.-levels Frenchmen, contrary to the title of one of 2006's bestselling books, *Obesity*. The French, in fact, have mostly, though, a woefully evocative phrase for junk food. With over 1,000 McDonald's restaurants, France now the fast-food giant's second most preferable national market. Remarkably, McDonald's 70,000 French workers—many of them minority youth from the suburbs who suffer from sky-high unemployment rates—eat at the country's largest private sector employer.

But those are the surface symptoms of a bone-deep malaise. *Pseudodemocracy* has the dual inverse, family, and home cooking, that core of any national culture, suffering in its absence. Menus now read by an average of 50 minutes compared to the all-male crowd of a generation ago; a supercilious disdain for the amateur that caused our bourgeois mothers were feeding their children "prestige" if they'd stopped in kitchen. There are two, equally indigestible, consequences to that. Future French chefs may not be faulted, at least not merely, by less-church-drenched educational park, but they are less likely than in the past to grow up seduced by the smells and tastes of the family kitchen.

And it was Jean-Antoine Betz-Serante,



AFTER HYPOOTHERAPIST (below) Christel (right) broke her back skydiving, the group helped her land her first of 600, back up

More powerful than a book club

Four women form a group dedicated to allowing each of them to realize a dream

BY JULIA BRECKINRELL • When graphic designer Amy Mead dreamed of having a baby, she took an economic step she joined forces with a group of women. It wasn't a pregnancy group; such women had a child and got financial help if the birthgroup's collective energy has made power than any one individual's. Thriving, it was a support group for dreams.

At the time, Mead was 38 and worried she'd blown her chances of getting pregnant by waiting too long. "There's enough in men there I was thinking along these lines," she said, already from her home in Florida, now that she's a mom, and now that her group has just published a book. Three years ago, the women hardly knew each other; now all four are the joint authors of *The Group: An Amazing Way to Achieve Success, Happiness and Extraordinary Relationships*. Tiffany Katherline is a massage therapist; Rebecca Corr is a hypnotherapist and professional speaker; Marja Hinds runs a corporate training company. They all live in Florida. "We just began with the idea of how we achieve more," says Hinds. "We sat around a table, discussing very openly what we wanted to get out of the group," remembers Mead.

Hinds went to go in Africa when she was offered to travel alone. "It was a lifelong dream. I don't typically share really heartfelt things with her, but I was sharing it with the group and this was the beginning. The group believed in me and then I began to believe in myself. When you speak about a dream, it gets more substance. When it's just in your mind, you can put it behind." Hinds' dream of Africa had sat on the back burner her whole life. "But when it's vocalized, it's out there. The group asked questions to find out what was

that was keeping me from traveling. Then I started taking action steps." Within months, Hinds had put down money with an organization called Birthwith, and was well on her way to studying midwifery at Birthwith.

The group meets once a month on Sunday. No food or alcohol is served. "When we want to have drinks and libations, we go out and we do that," says Mead. "But for our group meetings, it's very focused and clearly defined: the meetings start at 7:30 and go to 9:30 and every minute of those two hours is designated as a segment. If you started with a glass of wine, it would lose its effectiveness."

The meetings focus on one woman at a time. "The Honored One" has the full host, right-hand Host. When the Honored One speaks, the others listen without interrupting. "Non-interruption," explains their book, "includes interrupting your own thoughts and opinions or physically dragging or touching the speaker. Physical touch, in an attempt to comfort someone, can be distracting and stop the flow of thought and emotion."

When there are pauses, "allow the other Honored guest and listen." Do not say, "Oh yeah, that happened to me," and immediately what you mean" and proceed to tell your story. Do not set a problem solve. "You may think you have the right answer or impress the group with your knowledge." Resist the

turge to tell the Honored One "what you done in the past."

Hinds says the group "therapy for us but better than therapy because it's free. And you feel safe as an adult place. There are so many obstacles in life and you can get pretty beat down, but this is a place of letting you come to the meeting with and instead of it and then turn it around and say, 'How can I move on with my life and deal with it overwhelmed?'" Mead says the group helped her clear away self-defeating thoughts. "I believe this helped me relax and trust, which in turn helped me become pregnant."

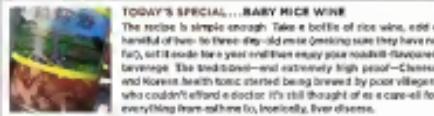
When one group member succeeds, the whole group celebrates "surreally." The book indicates the word surreally to emphasize the reaction not theory. "You don't have to force yourself to feel this way," they write in a section on jealousy. "If you ever feel jealous of what others have, you are not alone. In our competitive society, we are not typically taught to celebrate the success of others. Another's success can make us feel inadequate."

"Jealousy is blotted the longer you are a member of the group," they write. "Imagine listening to a fellow member share a dream. At the next meeting, she shares a goal she's never had. Two meetings later, she announces she has reached her goal. You may feel as excited as she is because you supported, encouraged and believed in her."



HONORABLE MENTION

Young and Green's daughter, Chastity Bono, is now "Chix." In a statement, her fans excused her pronouns, a spokesman announced Bono is undergoing a sex change, explaining that "she has made the courageous decision to honour her true identity" in the book *Feminly Outgoing: A Guide to Her Coming-Out Process for Girls, Lesbians, and Their Families*, Bono wrote about sexual healing. "Different from who my mom expected me to be."



DUSTY PERIN/SHUTTERSTOCK

TODAY'S SPECIAL... BABY RICE WINE

The recipe is simple enough. Take a bottle of rice wine, add a handful of rice to three or four dried Chinese soup cubes that have no fat, and add a dash of your favorite flavoring beverage. The traditional—and extremely high-proof—Chinese and Korean health tonic started being brewed by poor villagers who couldn't afford a doctor; it's still thought of as a cure-all for everything from asthma to, ironically, liver disease.



PROTESTERS in the streets of Goma. In February 2008, over 100 demonstrators were killed that month by Congolese security forces.

Name the date, Jennifer. I'll be there.

The CHRC's chief commissioner claims she is seeking a 'balanced debate.' Here's my offer.



MARK STEYN

Last week, I wrote about the two nationalist and quasi-fascist parties elected to the European Parliament. When a political movement calls itself, as in Bulgaria, the Attack Party, one naturally expects robustness rather than the usual drum of expelling whores that, in west Europe and in North America, the reality is that fascism piter passes in an audience of dopes, dunces, demagogues and belligerently uniformed ever deeper into Sol Dejouson (to use the title of Paul Babi's new tome) or (to his left) Kirby Shandt's and Peter Wark's book *The Tyranny Of Nazis*.

And so it is that the Canadian "Plan for Rights" Commission, after lying low during the worst year and a half in its existence, now finds it safe to pole its mast above the parapet. A year ago, at the height of public fury over its investigation of Macdonald's far-fetched excuse for not buying an except of my book, the CHRC sought to get itself off the hook in the traditional manner: commission a report. They signed off professor Richard Moore, who's no pal of mine and is dangerously partial to state censorship. Yet, amazingly, his findings, published at the end of last year, recommended the abolition of Section 13—not, on the grounds that this abominable "law" licensing ideological apparatuses to police the opinions of the citizenry at odds with eight centuries of Canadian legal inheritance, but on the narrower utilitarian basis that in the age of the Internet Section 13 is unnecessary.

Well, this came as a bit of a shock to the CHRC though police, who regard it as seriously flawed as the regime they regulate, the bound-

of-public database. They decided that the Moon report was so entirely the "longhouse" of the *co*-author, and that a second would shortly follow. So this month the CHRC's chief commissioner, Jennifer Lynch, Q.C. (which I believe stands for "Queen of Condescension"), presented a special report to Parliament called "Freedom of Expression and Freedom from the Internet Age."

By the way, let you think I'm exaggerating about interpret fascism, consider that until it appears to be "balancing" two "human rights," but, rather, it's a long road to such thing. "Freedom of" denotes a genuine human right, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly. "Freedom from" (with the exception of "freedom from government control") denotes not a human right but a government right—the right to erect a massive enforcement regime in pursuit of some stated goal. "Freedom from want" or "freedom from inequality" sound, to Canadians ears, very benign, but they presuppose, at minimum, a giant government regulatory regime and a restraint on real, actual "human" rights. "Freedom from hate" is an especially vulgar concept to a free society, since "hate" is a human emotion that bears no one degree or another, in every human heart. To be human is to hate and to be kind; see the scene in *Invitation to a Beheading* where Sartre's "The Scaffold" When or whenever in which it's privately exploited by the harshest heart, much more smoothly everything operates once you've had all those bold, confident, destabilizing things called "sexual" lined out and you're just war-dancing around with a giddy-eyed expression and a flat monotone voice, like Jennifer Lawrence reading out the fraternal greeting



THE GLASS-EYED Maryland woman who had her amniotic fluid cut, but is to be human, writes Steyn, is to hate and be hated

striped, beatened and then thrown into dungeons filled with broken glass and ash from burnt trees. In 1995, Tunis Edossa, after assassinating he would be mapping for the Cameron presidency against long-time strongman Paul Biya, was suddenly arrested and has been in jail ever since. In March last year, 125 Cameroonian detainees appeared for trial at the Douala Court of First Instance beaten and clad only in their underwear. In February, the publishers of *Le Peuple*, a newspaper in Bamako, reported on the high salaries of government officials, after which the police showed up, bound and blindfolded them, and took them away. According to Amnesty International, in 2007 alone nine men and four women were executed of banality.

Okay, Steyn, that's enough. Consideration calling time update: what's your point? Only this. Ever since Commissioner Lynch decided to turn herself into a myth, I've made it my job to keep at least as extreme a file on Jennifer as her organization keeps on those Canadian citizens of whom it doesn't approve. And I was struck by the fact that Commissioner Lynch's introductory remarks at last October's "Discrimination Prevention Forum" in Ottawa:

"From year to year, we generate more interest in the global human rights community. I estimate a want to know to our distinguished international guests, Mr. Justice Clarence Bardsley, Chief Commissioner of the Canadian National Human Rights and Freedoms Commissioner, and Mr. Maxime Bernier, also from the Canadian Commission. We are pleased to welcome with us Mr. Graham Fraser, Commissioner of Official Languages, and Chief Commissioner Barbara Hall, from the Ontario Human Rights Commission, who bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to our gathering."

What's so "Instagrammed" about the Canadian Human Rights Commission? Canadian human rights lawyers have an appealing human rights record, beatened and bound, and then thrown into dungeons filled with broken glass and ash from burnt trees. Why weren't they amongst the "daring gamblers" at Cormacur Lynch's "Discrimination Prevention Forum"? Not enough Air Canada frequent-flyer miles?

If you schmooze through Third World drug stores, it's not surprising your postmodern cohort relatives start to feel past the point of no return. As Commissioner Lynch pointed out in her report, America's First Amendment absolutism on free speech is out of sync with the "growing global consensus" that would be the "growing global consensus" represented by the CHRC and an "enlightened party" like Sweden and Cameroon, split, the difference, and that should be enough human rights for anyone.

In an op-ed for the *Globe and Mail*, Jennifer Lynch justified her report on the grounds that she would issue a "balanced debate." That same day, CTV hooked her and Ross Levant, author of *Shakedown*, the bestselling book about Canada's "human rights" regime, on to *Power Play*, to have that, er, "debate"; she's always talking about "When Queen Jennifer heard Ross was to be on the show, she refused to debate him, and demanded he be booted from the interview. As Kirby Shandt put it, "Canada's Official Censor" has to Censor TV Debate About Censorship."

Okay, if she's not labelled Ross, I'd be happy to do it. All very "balanced." Maclean's can sponsor it, Steve Paikin or some such public TV crew can anchor it. Name's the dill, I'll be there, that, in the absence of any willingness to debate, reasonable people wondering Canada's amazingly anachronistic Official Censor right object not just philosophically but on Professor Moon-like utilitarian grounds. If you're not smart enough to debate Ross Levant, you're not smart enough to police the opinions of reasonable people. ■

MACLEAN'S

BESTSELLERS

COMPILED BY BRUCE KIRKMAN

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LAST WEEK'S BESTSELLERS ON LIST

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EXPLORE CANADA'S EAST COAST

WITH HOST SHEILAGH ROGERS AND AUTHOR ALISTAIR MACLEOD

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ROGERS

MACLEAN'S
MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL



SPEAKING FROM IMPROV: our Prime Minister has been mining his store of bluntness and charm—and that's just with a handful

The things he could teach our kids

Kim Jong Il could give a heck of a graduation speech. Actually, so could our dear leader.



SCOTT FESCHUK



KIM JONG IL

We are in the last days of the season for commencement speeches, the annual time in which famous and successful people urge graduating students to follow their hearts, live their dreams, change the world, help everyone, boss daily, be nice to everyone and, oops, sorry we went and broke a global economy just as you were preparing to look for work. Enjoy extraction!

The truth is that graduates don't need to be bombarded with well-meaning but dubious expressions of optimism; that's what wedding toasts are for. What they need is practical advice they can actually use in their lives—and wisdom based on real experience, probably distilled by those who have the taste of disappointment. (Note: the "taste of disappointment" can be acquired through one's own personal failure or by being the poster for the movie *Wishbone*.)

Take Kim Jong Il, for instance. An enthusiastic cheerleader in commencement speeches? Sure! But really, who's qualified to extol the virtues of perseverance? That's a guy whose dreams literally exploded into the sea and dissolved into a foible puff of oxygen-grade fatality—but did that stop him from presiding over national famine, strife and nuclear war? An amateur in his pursuit of the essence for inflicting upon the world a staggering nuclear holocaust? Not a chance. If Hollywood executives had had that kind of resolve and determination, we'd have four or five terrible Hollywood movies by now, instead of just two.

Here at home, I can't imagine Brian Mulroney received too many invitations to speak this spring, and even fewer that can't imagine

anyone generally can think of all he has to offer. The former prime minister could talk about the hazards of hubris and the perils of demanding a public inquiry into himself. He could talk about all that, but being Mulroney he'd probably speak on the topic of "Can Anything Else Break a \$1,000 Bill?"

Or what about the current occupant of 24 Sussex Drive? Stephen Harper has experienced his share of drama and defeat, and that's just with a handful. The man has seen it all. Of course, the Prime Minister is busy encouraging the recession we can't be having right now because we didn't already have it before, so I took the liberty of writing the uplifting conclusion to his commencement address:

"Graduates, as you look to the future, I urge you to remember that no matter the scope of the problems you face, no matter the magnitude of the challenges you confront, there is always a way to triumph. Stand tall and remember courage, honesty, integrity—these are for winners. A much better solution is negative advertising."

"Over the years, I've found that my own choices shortcomings are best addressed not by personal improvement or sacrifice, both of which can be a real pain, but by emphasizing or even inventing the flaws of others."

"The best thing about this approach of mine, refined over many years of being picked last in the sports, is that it doesn't work only in politics. Denying a rival in an office wedding, Taliban sympathizer or child pornographer is fun and effective in most aspects of life, including politics."

"Let's say you're up for a promotion at work. It's down to you and one other guy. And that guy—well, call him Brian Mulroney—is using all

sorts of unfair tactics to get the job, like lying, legalism and a personality. All it takes is one of the odds in a video lottery, a little creativity and a soul as black as night."

[Smirks.] True-type music over black-and-white images of Kim Jong Il chasing adorable children off his lawn, possibly while holding a rifle.

Grey, omnious inter-over:
Ron Jenkins. He's been at our company for 12 years.
He had the same job for 12 years.
You know who else worked in the same job for 12 years?
Hider.

It makes you wonder: what else does Ron Jenkins have in common with history's greatest dictator?

And where does Ron Jenkins go when he leaves the office? Does he go to see his family? Or does he go... somewhere else?

[Arrives] depiction of New Jersey having apple martians eat Al Capone, Pat Pat and O'Donnell.

Ron Jenkins says he's a company man. But every summer, he doesn't come into work for two whole weeks—while excepting a paycheque! That's just like stealing, except in the legal sense.

[Image of the earth exploding.]
Plus, Ron Jenkins might theoretically have puppy dogs.

[Image of a puppy dog exploding.]
Ron Jenkins—he's not at our company because he's in for himself!

"Graduates, as you head out into the world, I urge you to never forget the only place of value that truly matters—if you don't have anything nice to say, you're not the right teach." ■

NORA ULRIKE PERRA BOOTH

1941-2009

After retiring from teaching, she became a clown, entertaining patients in hospitals and nursing homes

Nora Ulrike Perra Booth was born on Nov. 13, 1941, in then German-occupied Gleiwitz, now Gliwice, Poland. The second daughter of Martha and Werner Bruchmann, Nora narrowly escaped death at the age of three when her family was being evicted by the Nazi army. The truck that was moving a Nazi's pack, and she had to rebury herself. A soldier referred to her, then catch up with the truck. Just as they got off, gunfire erupted. The truck sped off, leaving the soldier and Nora in the fight against the Allies, and her mother believed the two gone. But two hours later the soldier miraculously reappeared, with Nora in his arms.

The family immigrated to Canada in 1951 and settled in Kitchener, Ont., where her father became an executive of the Jans Shoe Company. When the son of North Africa's later Mariana was killed on Labour Day weekend by a drunk driver, Mariana's death would remain an agonizing memory in Nora's life. Shortly after, the family relocated to Hamilton, where Nora finished her high school degree. She graduated from McMaster University in 1961 and became a high school teacher with the Brantford school board.

Two years later, Nora took a leave of absence to visit Europe with three friends. In late July, they traveled by bus from Italy down to New York City, where they boarded a boat across the Aarella and enjoyed a 10-day cruise to England. After touring England, they stayed with North's aunt Lise, a Lutheran nun who lived outside of Berlin, Germany, then bought a Volkswagen for their tour. By December, they were in Florence, where a year before the river Arno had flooded the city. Towns of students were volunteering to remove damaged books, documents and artifacts.

"That's where Nora decided that she was meant to be on the go all the time," recalls Linda Golding, who was on the trip. "Taken by the city, Nora settled in Florence to volunteer as well."

It was there she met her future husband, Schlesinger Perra, a member of the Carabinieri, Italy's military police. He was wearing his navy blue uniform complete with military hat during their first encounter on the streets of Florence. (On Sunday, Schlesinger had the whole afternoon off and they would always play together around.) They, like everyone else, were like a princess," he remembers. In 1973, he requested a six day leave from the force to wed Nora,

in a ceremony that took place in Florence on a sunny day in early September. They settled in Toronto and had three children, Alan, Eva, and later, followed by their second daughter, Christine, a year after. "I have never met anyone who was so totally proud and accepting of our girls," says Nora's friend of 28 years, John Fryd. "The three of them together could do anything."

Norah Schlesinger separated after 15 years of marriage but remained involved in each other's lives. "They were ahead of their time," says Mrs. Schlesinger. "They always encouraged parents together." In fact, when they finally divorced in 1993, they didn't bother to get the divorce certificate on paper. When Nora wanted to remarry in 2001, she found minor administrative hurdles—she was technically still married to Schlesinger in the absence of the physical certificate.

Following her retirement from teaching in 1998, Nora lived a free-spirited spontaneous life. For the first time she dressed up as Santa Claus for Christmas, even though her kids were in their twenties. She also began clowning with her friend, Mary Lynn Robert, alongside the clown-like royal family. The two performed at hospitals and nursing homes across Toronto with the Toronto Clown Alley, a clown association. "She saw a way of being out there, and a talent that she could give to other people," says daughter Christine. In fact, Nora was on

the cover of the March 3, 2004, issue of Maclean's magazine, for a story about retirees finding weird careers.

Moving into a new condominium in 2001, Nora infused the "spirit" of the community, says neighbour Jean Keele. She had stopped dancing by 2005 and served as the Bayview condominium board's full-time treasurer, celebrated birthdays and anniversaries with baked goods, and organized teas and potlucks after officially receiving her divorce certificate, she married Cac Booth, her partner of 12 years, in 2008. Cacra, originally died early of pulmonary fibrosis in 2007. Then, on Feb. 8, 2008, experiencing indigestion and bloating, Nora visited Sunnybrook hospital, where she used to closure. She was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. "She asked me if I would paint a picture after her diagnosis. She wanted to give it to her granddaughter, Sonora," says Jean. Nora passed away in her home on May 20, 2009. She was 67. The pre-arranged casket was Sonora's mom.

BY STEPHANIE FISHER



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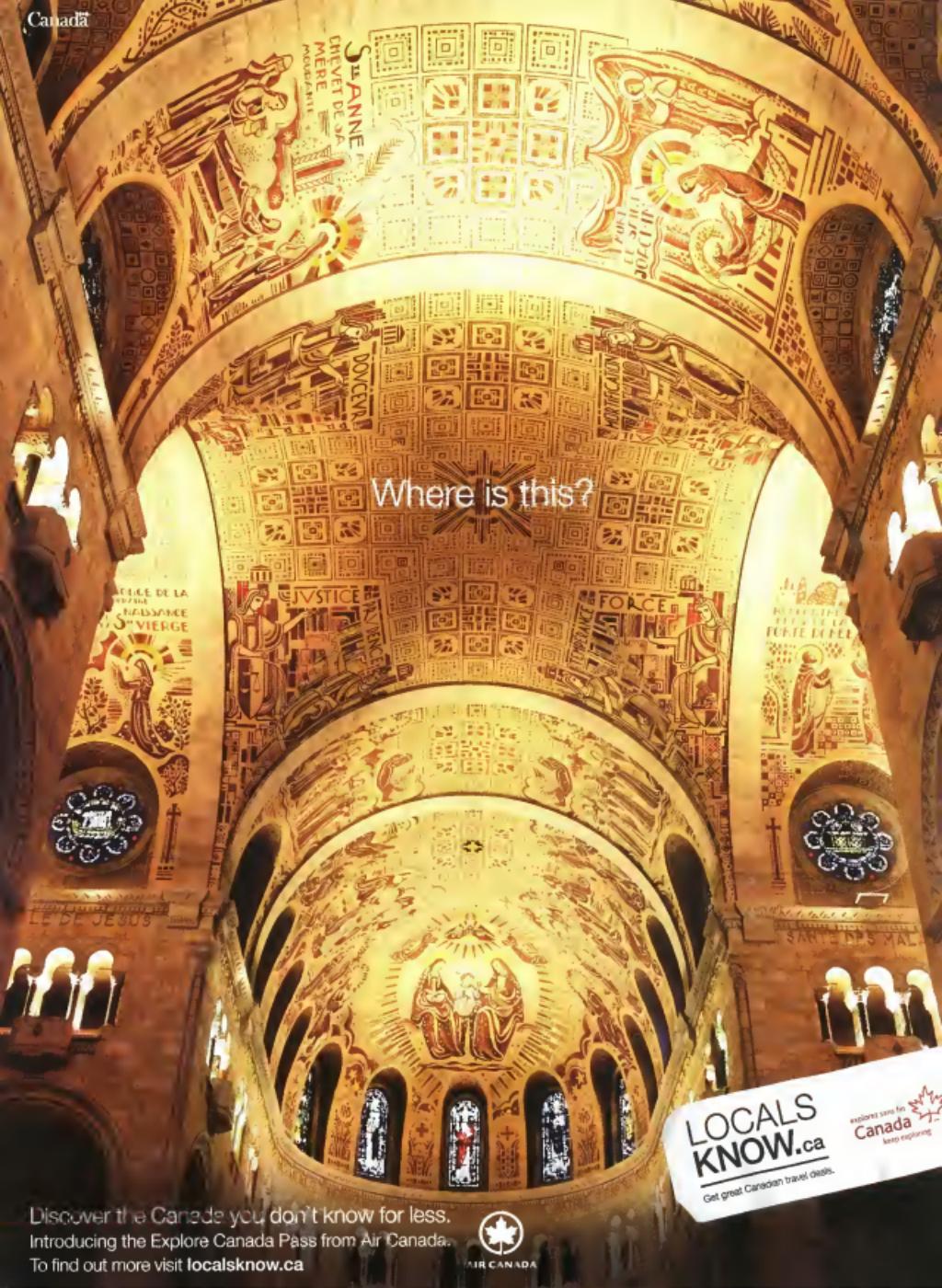


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